

For Reference

NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS ROOM

For Reference

NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS ROOM

Ex LIBRIS
UNIVERSITATIS
ALBERTAENSIS



1-2-63
728(F)
50

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE FICTITIOUS EDITOR IN THE PERIODICALS OF STEELE AND ADDISON

by

W. R. ELLENWOOD

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

JULY 31, 1963

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled The Fictitious Editor in the Periodicals of Steele and Addison, submitted by W. R. Ellenwood in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

All of the periodicals of Steele and Addison were published anonymously, most of them making use of a fictitious editor: a single voice who was supposed to be responsible for the writing and editing of them. The predecessors of the Tatler had included most of the material to be found therein, and many of them had made use of some sort of fictitious framework, usually a club or a "society of gentlemen," for the presentation of it; but none of them had developed a single humorous, learned, worldly-wise, sympathetic character, with friends and a family history who at the same time that he disguised the actual authors, entertained the readers, provided a central unifying attraction for the papers, and generally made instruction more agreeable in works that were all morally or politically didactic.

The development of the device began in the Tatler, reached its height in the Spectator and Guardian, and from then on tended to decline. But the figure of the whimsical, public-spirited, censorious "editor" profoundly influenced the history of the periodical essay in England. It was so effective that the Spectator became the model for a whole age of essayists, including Johnson and Goldsmith, who did however, introduce some changes in style and form.

Those periodicals in which the fictitious editors were most fully developed--the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian--are still the most widely read of their type.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
University of Alberta Libraries

<https://archive.org/details/Ellenwood1963>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
FOOTNOTES	13
II. BACKGROUNDS AND CHARACTERS OF THE FICTITIOUS EDITORS	15
FOOTNOTES	33
III. THE VALUE OF THE DEVICE	35
FOOTNOTES	69
IV. CONCLUSION	72
FOOTNOTES	80
BIBLIOGRAPHY	81

. . . as there are those who dispute, whether there is any such real person as Isaac Bickerstaff or not, I shall excuse all persons who appear what they really are, from coming to my funeral. But all those who are, in their way of life, personae, as the Latins have it, persons assumed, and who appear what they really are not, are hereby invited to that solemnity. (Tatler 7)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since Addison and Steele were involved in many periodicals, some of which may be unfamiliar, as a beginning we may catalogue them briefly in chronological order.

- Tatler. (April 12, 1709 -- January 2, 1711) Tri-weekly, 271 numbers. Steele, Addison, and others.
- Whig Examiner. (September 14 -- October 12, 1710) Weekly, 5 numbers. Addison alone.
- Spectator I. (March 1, 1711 -- December 6, 1712) Daily, 555 numbers. Steele, Addison, and others.
- Guardian. (March 12, 1713 -- October 1, 1713) Daily, 175 numbers. Steele, Addison, and others.
- Englishman I. (October 6, 1713 -- February 15, 1714) Tri-weekly, 57 numbers. Steele.
- Lover. (February 25 -- May 27, 1714) Tri-weekly, 40 numbers. Steele.
- Reader. (April 22 -- May 10, 1714) Tri-weekly, 9 numbers. Steele.
- Spectator II. (June 18 -- December 20, 1714) Tri-weekly, 80 numbers. Addison and others: Steele was not involved.
- Englishman II. (July 11 -- November 21, 1715) Bi-weekly, 38 numbers. Steele.
- Freeholder. (December 23, 1715 -- June 29, 1716) Bi-weekly, 55 numbers. Addison.
- Town-Talk. (December 17, 1715 -- February 13, 1716) Weekly, not regular, 9 numbers. Steele.
- Chit-Chat. (March 10, 1716 and March 16). Steele.
- Theatre. (January 2 -- April 5, 1720) Bi-weekly, 28 numbers. Steele.

There are, generally speaking, two types of periodical in this list: those which may be called literary (the Tatler, Spectators, Guardian, Lover) devoted primarily to comments on manners, morals and the arts; and those which were mostly political (Whig Examiner, Englishman, Reader, Freeholder) devoted more exclusively to polemics. Some, like the Theatre, Town-Talk, and Chit-Chat, for reasons that will become apparent, are more difficult to categorize.

The Tatler is too familiar to warrant description in any detail, but it is worth recalling that this periodical, the first attempt, began as a sort of miscellaneous sheet containing three or four short articles in each number:

All accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment,

shall be under the article of White's Chocolate-house; poetry, under that of Will's coffee-house; Learning, under the title of Grecian; foreign and domestic news, you will have from Saint James's Coffee-house, and what else on any other subject shall be dated from my own apartment. (No. 1)

The motto, Quicquid agunt homines . . . nostri est farrago libelli (translated, "whate'er men do, or say, or think, or dream/ Our motley paper seizes for its theme") was well followed, for the Tatler, to begin with, certainly tended to be a motley sheet. As time went on, however, news became less prevalent, and the articles became longer and longer, until, at the end, most of the numbers were made up of single essays, and the greater part of them were dated "from my own apartment." This type of single essay became a favourite form for Steele and Addison, and was brought to perfection in the later papers, though of course letters and short comments were always used extensively.

There is very little difference between the form and material found in the last Tatlers and those in the Spectator, Guardian, and Lover. Variations were simply played on the same themes; ideas were developed and techniques perfected. The famous Spectator Club and the Lizard family of the Guardian, for instance, have their roots in the Trumpet Club and the Bickerstaff family (especially Jenny Distaff) of the Tatler. The second series of the Spectator, a one-volume continuation in which Steele had no part, is not noticeably different from its predecessor in form and content. The Guardian is certainly in the Spectator tradition, though it is on the whole slightly more serious in tone, and toward the end it becomes more involved, though still only slightly, in partisan conflicts. The Lover was by Steele, and was "written in imitation of the Tatler." Though it appeared only shortly after the politically involved Englishman, the Lover was almost free from polemics, and was different from its literary forerunners only in the apparently restricted nature of its subject matter, which was all to be associated, somehow, with love.

After mature Deliberation with my self upon this Subject, I have thought, that if I could trace the Passion or Affection of Love, through all its Joys and Inquietudes, through all the Stages and Circumstances of Life, in both Sexes, with strict respect to Virtue and Innocence, I

should, by a just Representation and History of that one Passion, steal into the Bosom of my Reader, and build upon it all the Sentiments and Resolutions which incline and qualify us for every thing that is truly Excellent, Great, and Noble. (No. I)

As for the question of why it should take the Tatler as its model, Rae Blanchard has this comment to make:

Steele does not explain, but several answers may be conjectured: it may have been because of the political associations of the later journals which The Tatler had not had, and which he now desired to avoid; or because it was tri-weekly instead of six-day; or because Isaac Bickerstaff, 'my Predecessor, whom I profess to imitate', was more akin to gentle old Marmaduke Myrtle, that is to say Steele's character-mask as lover, than Mr. Spectator or Nestor Ironside would have been. Or Steele may have intended its social purpose, like that of The Tatler, to be more closely allied to manners and practical morals, its tone lighter and less solemnly moralizing, its method more empirical than had been the case with The Spectator and The Guardian.¹

The political papers varied far more among themselves in scope and intensity. Some, like the first series of Steele's Englishman and Addison's Freeholder, were quite extensive and not entirely political. These are still quite enjoyable to read. They are a mixture of pure polemics and the entertaining style of the literary papers.² Others like the Whig Examiner, the Englishman (second series) and the Reader, are hardly more than series of pamphlets designed to disparage the political opposition, or comment on a current crisis. The Whig Examiner was a line-by-line reply to the Examiner on behalf of the Whigs in which Addison tried to discredit the writing ability, as well as the principles, of the Tories' major mouthpiece. The Whig Examiner reached only five numbers, and was probably used as an escape valve, by Addison, at the time when he was trying to prevent the Tatler from becoming embroiled in answering the Examiner's arguments. Rae Blanchard could say, with justice, of the first series of the Englishman, that "for a political journal [it] contains a good many non-political papers" and that it "participates in the literary tradition of The Tatler and The Spectator."³ But this would not apply to the second series, which is pure propaganda, devoid of any note of humour. The Reader, which occurred between the two series of the Englishman, was

most similar to the last: "It is not a newspaper, and it has no resemblance to the essay journal except for the Latin motto. Its candid purpose was to serve as a Whig propaganda sheet."⁴

Town-Talk and Chit-Chat were unique since they used the device of a letter to a lady in the country, but in content they were actually similar to the Reader.

These periodicals of 1716, characterized by short runs and longer interim periods, were used as vehicles for limited subjects of immediate interest. In Town-Talk the central topic was theatrical affairs at Drury Lane and the little theatre, the Censorium, during the critical season of 1715-16; . . . in Chit-Chat it was the aftermath following the execution of the Jacobite lords. That is to say, they were 'occasional' not only in the sense of irregular frequency but also in the sense of being designed to meet special occasions.⁵

The Theatre, Steele's last periodical effort, was essentially a return to the old form, but the subject-matter was perhaps more completely a mélange than that of any other of the papers. It is mostly concerned with the theatre, and with Steele's quarrel with Newcastle over the management of Drury Lane, but it also contains some humour, an account by a wanton of her fall (No. 6), an article on duelling (No. 19), and economic tracts attacking the South Sea Company (Nos. 22-24).

In some cases, the classification of these periodicals as either "literary" or "political" may be rather misleading, because this is often a question of emphasis or inclination rather than quality. Few of the obviously political publications are completely devoid of articles which may be termed literary, and none of the literary papers are entirely free of politics. But the Tatler, Spectator, Guardian, and Lover are certainly more literary than political; and they, because they are most extensive, and because they employ most fully such literary devices as the fictitious editor, will be of most importance for this discussion. Others like the Englishman, Freeholder, Town-Talk and Theatre will merit some consideration, but the rest, which approach closest to being mere pamphlets, will have little interest for us.

Of course the Tatler and its followers did not suddenly appear, unprecedented, on the scene. Periodical sheets of many kinds were being

distributed in London long before 1709. All sorts of journals found their way to the coffee-houses; indeed, "during the period 1620 - 1700 seven hundred titles--newspapers and periodicals--were offered to the public. . . ." ⁶ A rising, reading, knowledge-hungry middle class began to replace the patron as the financial boon to aspiring authors, and periodical writing attracted most of the great writers of the time. Mercuries and gazettes of all description sprang up, though many of them had difficulty surviving over night. Classification of these publications is not simple, for "even the major distinction between newspaper and periodical--that of emphasis upon current affairs--became obscured when each printed material logically the component of the other." ⁷ However, at the two extremes the distinction is apparent as, for instance, in the case of two publications of which Steele was the editor in 1709 and 1710: the London Gazette (the official government news organ) and the Tatler. It is with the latter that we are concerned, and any account of its inheritance must try and distinguish the qualities of its ancestors which were somehow "literary", or at least separate from the purely newsworthy. The following short history is by no means complete, but it will give some idea of the material with which Steele had to work. ⁸

The literary periodical begins in the latter half of the seventeenth century with the appearance of papers which were disseminators not only of news (as most of the gazettes were) but also of knowledge. In the beginning these often took the form of learned journals publishing abstracts of books. Most of these were similar to the French Journal des Scavans (1665) which "led to the beginning in England of a long line of serials devoted largely to the summarizing of books for busy or lazy readers, and indirectly led to the critical review." ⁹ The Journal des Scavans also contained some original work, and was apparently published under an assumed name. Some of the imitators in Britain were The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society (1665), Mercurius Librarius (1668), Philosophical Collections (1669), Weekly Memorials for the Ingenious (1682), The Universal Historical Bibliotheque (1687) and the Mercurius Eruditorum (1691), which made some attempt to establish a "club" of dramatis personae, each of whom would give a regular account of books he had read.

These serious, learned journals were soon joined by another type of periodical, also created in response to the ever-increasing demand for information: the more popular, sometimes humorous, question-and-answer paper. Dunton's famous Athenian Mercury, begun in 1691, was the immensely influential original of this type. It attempted to answer questions on "Divinity, Physick, Law, Philosophy, History, Poetry, Mathematics, Trade, and all other questions proposed by either Sex, or in any language,"¹⁰ posed in letters from the readers. The answers, in this case, were supposed to come from a group of experts called the Athenian Society. For the most part they were strictly informative, answering such questions on science as "Why is the Sea Salt?", "What is the cause of Thunder? and what is it?"; and on religion, such as "What became of the Waters after Noah's Flood?" and "Whether the ancient Philosophers, upon supposition of living good Lives, can be reasonably thought to be damned?" But they also were, in some ways, censors and advisors to those who were concerned with problems of manners and morals. When answering questions falling into these categories, the members of the Society often wrote in a style and tone which presaged the Tatler. A lady with a good fortune, for example, having asked which is the lesser evil for a husband among "a fool, a fop, or a beau, a cotquean, or a book-learned sot, or one they call a sober, honest man, . . ." is rewarded with an answer which takes the form of a long, humorous essay, giving a character of each, and suggestions concerning them. The answer could easily be mistaken for one of the "characters" from the Tatler, as even this small part of it will show:

The Beau is only a Fop of the last Edition, a very Fortune-hunter, and therefore the Ladies must look to themselves, for he aims as sharply at all the Young, as the crazy King of Portugal used to do at the old Women, and hopes as surely to fetch 'em down with his Heart-breakers, as t'other with his Blunderbuss. He is in love with his Cloaths as much as the Fop with himself, he is all Garniture Could a Lady change him as oft as he does his Fashions, 'twould be a little safer vent'ring upon him; but she may have a better Pennyworth, if she can find any Way to purchase his Cloaths, for then she has all of him, or at least a more essential Part than either his Soul or Body.¹¹

The members of the society, who were anonymous and who, by the way, were

only four, were faced with a fantastic variety of questions both serious and facetious. They answered them all, or evaded them skilfully, never suggesting all the while that they might not be a very large group, and especially that they might not be authorities on the subjects in question.

The Athenian Mercury was concerned, then, with informing the populace about a wide variety of matters, but according to Charles Gildon, the author of the History of the Athenian Society, its chief aim was "to convey under a pleasant Dress, Notions of Virtue and Honour into the Commonality, and rather make them better than wiser" ¹² If this was true, then its affinity with the Tatler is even closer. At any rate the Athenian Mercury carried on for a number of years, with many imitators, such as the London Mercury, the Jovial Mercury, the Ladies Mercury, and the British Apollo (1708-11). This last, which was "Performed by a Society of Gentlemen," was begun before and ran concurrently with the Tatler, and very probably had some influence on Steele. ¹³

There was also developing, by 1680, a class of periodical devoted more completely to amusement, which apparently arose from ribald political tracts. Graham sees two types of entertaining serials derived from these: the first

. . . is valuable for its employment of "character" and for the light it throws on taverns and coffee-houses and social life of the period, yet may be given scant consideration in literature because of its obsession with filth and obscenity. ¹⁴

Among the best examples of these he includes Ward's London Spy (1698); the English Lucian (1698), which uses different places of writing as the Tatler did, and attacks Partridge; the Weekly Comedy and Ward's Humours of the Coffee-House, a Comedy (later changed to the Weekly Comedy; or the Humours of the Age) both of which employed a host of dramatis personae, several of whom are introduced in each number. The last of this type were the Wandering Spy (1705), and London Terrae Filius or Satyrical Reformer (1707-8), which "represented the logical end of this line of development. . . ."

By 1709 the service of such works in the evolution of publications, especially, reflected, to some extent, the rising tide of reform respecting men's manners and morals. These periodicals had also helped to develop the "character"

as a device for securing concreteness. But what is more important, they had given the public much entertainment in serial form, making more urgent the subsequent necessity for amusing readers.¹⁵

The second line of development is represented by Motteux's Gentleman's Journal of 1692, which was modeled on the Mercury Galant of Paris, written as a letter to a friend in the country, and which contained a wide variety of subjects and entertainment. Its full title was "The Gentleman's Journal: or, the Monthly Miscellany. By way of a Letter to a Gentleman in the Country. Consisting of News, History, Philosophy, Poetry, Musick, Translation &c." Each number opened with a familiar address to the fictitious gentleman in the country, giving a brief account of the news of the town. Some practices, such as including enigmas in verse, and songs with words and music, were not continued by Steele, but others were: the inclusion of original verse, translations from the classics, critical discussions, and fables.¹⁶ Of course the Gentleman's Journal, being published monthly, contained a great deal of material in each number, but it always remained a true miscellany devoted primarily to entertainment, having few long articles and even fewer devoted to serious topics. It was probably the closest to what we now think of as a magazine, in its very comprehensive nature, and it, along with its contemporary the Athenian Mercury, is seen by Graham to have had a great influence in effecting the change toward a lessening of Puritan prejudice against literature and criticism.¹⁷

Another influential work was Defoe's Mercure Scandale, or the Advice from the Scandalous Club, or the Little Review, as it was variously called. It was begun as a sort of entertaining appendage to his political Review (1704), devoted to discussing and answering questions, often facetiously, concerning manners and morals, and it was actually dropped when it became too popular, as it drew too much time and attention from the parent work, which Defoe saw as more important.

It is the best example after Dunton of the pure question-answer serial. As it lengthened the queries into letters and the answers into essays, it was an important link between the Athenian Mercury and the Tatler.¹⁸

The periodicals which Steele and Addison eventually offered have often been called the finest examples of their type in English literature;

the refinement of all that had gone before. Certainly the best of these not only show signs within themselves of a process of evolution in which the techniques of the authors developed, but they reveal, as well, the fact that they are inheritors of "the devices and methods and tone of many predecessors."¹⁹ The form, the dating of articles from various places, the question-and-answer device, the use of letters, the club, the use of characters, news, the single essay, the tendency toward reform, and even the Partridge joke, each found in the Tatler, had all been used somewhere before.

In its subject matter, The Tatler shows constantly the influence of Ned Ward's wit and comment on London life, the reforming urge of Dunton, Defoe, and Tutchin, Motteux's miscellaneous entertainment, and the increasing tendency to comment on books and writers illustrated in the History of Learning, 1691, the Compleat Library, 1692, and the Monthly Miscellany of 1707 - 8.²⁰

Steele was no great innovator. The success of his periodicals cannot be attributed to their originality, but they show brilliant synthesis and development of familiar materials, so that "it may be said that everything in the evolution of the literary periodical in England leads up to the Tatler."²¹

But Steele and Addison were not only journalists; they were essayists, and as such are distinguished from men like Dunton, Motteux, and Ward who have been relegated solely to the former category. The Tatler, Spectator and Guardian came to contain more than letters or short articles. It was by Steele and Addison that the true essay periodical, which was to be so widely read throughout the century, was brought to popularity; and so their position in the history of this genre, as well as in the history of the periodical journal, deserves some notice.

The beginnings of the essay in England apparently may be traced along three different lines: ". . . the line which leads to the character-writers of the seventeenth century, the line of criticism, and the line of polemics."²² One or all of these occur in most of the periodicals before 1709, and all of them emerge, as even a cursory examination will show, in the Tatler and its followers. But there was also a line of French origin, imported with the popular translations of Montaigne, which gave

rise to a group, starting with Bacon, who "regarded the essay as a receptacle for detached thoughts."²³ Bacon, in fact, developed his own peculiar form, but as closer disciples of Montaigne there were those who used the essay as a means of expressing very personal reflections, sometimes approaching light confession. The type of essay produced by this group is described as the "familiar essay" by Melvin R. Watson, who traces it from Montaigne to Cowley and Temple, through Boswell and others, to Charles Lamb who was the master of the form in English. The Spectator tradition was distinguished from the "familiar" tradition by the purpose of the writing, which was social comment rather than personal expression-- "The essay periodical depicts a social age; the familiar essay, an individual."²⁴ As the eighteenth century generally frowned on intimate, ego-centric writing, it would naturally be expected that Steele and Addison, writing periodical journals, which are among the least personal of all forms of literature, should somehow mark a break in the development of the true familiar essay. This, Mr. Watson says, they did, but it is interesting to note the qualifications he makes:

Yet Steele, in spite of all restrictions imposed upon him by the age and the form in which he worked, succeeded often in revealing the familiar essay spirit. In another age, freed of the artificial devices which so encumbered the essay periodical, Steele undoubtedly would have blossomed into a full-fledged member of the society of choice spirits, for he had the temperament and the personality.

.
In his egotism . . . in his spontaneous, informal manner . . . in the subjectivity of his criticism, he was akin to Lamb and Hazlitt. Occasionally, too, he is consciously autobiographical, as in the account of his father's death and mother's grief [Tatler 181], and always his "pure humanity", as Coleridge called it, shines forth brightly. But Steele usually hid his feelings and talked through various mouthpieces.²⁵

Now whether or not Steele and Addison broke the progression of the familiar essay, and especially whether this is good or bad, is of little concern for us here (though it could probably as easily be argued that they maintained the style, if not the substance of the familiar essay in an age which otherwise might have totally discarded it), but Mr. Watson's comment on the "various mouthpieces" and their uses is very significant. Here we

have, it would seem, a hint concerning one of the major qualities of the Spectator: a fusion of the periodical form and the spirit of the familiar essay (periodicals, of course, did not always contain essays and essays were not often published in periodical form) so that didactic and even polemic discussion could be delivered at times in a very informal style. If the authors did not openly write about themselves, they willingly expressed personal opinions and even experiences from behind a mask; if they were not willing to speak proudly and facetiously about themselves, they created a character who would. The media, the material, and countless devices for their periodicals may have been borrowed from journalistic predecessors, but this quality of personality, in the extent of its development, was an original contribution by Steele and Addison.

One of the most-used devices for achieving a tone of personality in periodicals had been the letter. In actual fact this was perhaps the one socially acceptable outlet for written confidences that was available to the eighteenth-century gentleman, and all of the really popular fore-runners of the Tatler made use of it, even resorting to using fictitious correspondents when necessary. There appears to have been some need for familiarity which the use of letters partially satisfied. This Steele and Addison obviously recognized, for they used the letter form extensively in all of their major periodicals. But they added something more: the fictitious editor. As far as I can discover, none of the previous journals made such a concerted effort to establish their masks as life-like characters--this is a point which Graham and others do not pursue, in their concern with form and subject-matter.

It is the contention of this thesis that Steele and Addison succeeded in combining the form and content of the periodical journal with the tone of the familiar essay, largely through the use of the fictitious editor. One of the main reasons for the great popularity of their "lucubrations" (even the use of this word suggests the change from the impersonal advice of the Scandalous Club and the Athenian Society) was that they appeared to come from a single, intimate confidant; that they were, through the skilful use of the device of the fictitious editor, pleasant counterfeits of the truly familiar style of writing, though their purpose, in the

periodical tradition, was reform.

An attempt will be made to describe the character, background, and development of the fictitious editors; and to show how they allowed all of the traditional advantages of anonymity, as well as increasing the literary value of the papers by instilling the important note of familiarity mentioned above, and providing an entertaining focal personality which tended to hold the various papers together; all of this helping to fulfil the didactic aim of the authors. The device was perfected, it will be seen, in the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian, after which it began a slow decline to a mere shadow of itself, as the nature of the papers changed. But it was widely imitated for some years thereafter, even though the originators themselves seemed aware that they had quickly brought it to about as complete a form as possible, in the Spectator. The fictitious editor remains, to this day, one of the major attractions to readers of the periodical.

FOOTNOTES

¹"Introduction," Steele's Periodical Journalism 1714-16, p. ix.

²The Freeholder, especially, attempts to persuade good-humoredly. Addison includes, for example, the "Memoirs of a Preston Rebel" (No. 3), a light satirical paper which suggests the irresponsibility of the rebels and their cause. He spends much time with the ladies, turning them against Popery by reminding them of the devastating effects a fish-diet would have on their complexion, not to mention the melancholy thought of "several sightly men delivered over to an inviolable celibacy" (No. 4).

³"Introduction," Steele's "The Englishman", p. xv.

⁴Blanchard, "Introduction," Steele's Periodical Journalism 1714-16, p. xvii.

⁵Ibid., p. xx.

⁶R. P. Bond, Studies in The Early English Periodical, p. 3.

⁷Bond, p. 14.

⁸For more complete information see George S. Marr, The Periodical Essayists of the Eighteenth Century; Walter Graham, English Literary Periodicals; or Richmond P. Bond, "Introduction," Studies in the Early English Periodical.

⁹Graham, English Literary Periodicals, pp. 22-23.

¹⁰"The History of the Athenian Society," The Athenian Oracle, IV (London, 1728), 21-22.

¹¹The Athenian Oracle, II, 255.

¹²"The History of the Athenian Society," op. cit., 55.

¹³Graham, "Some Predecessors of the Tatler," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, XXIV (1934), 553-4.

¹⁴Graham, English Literary Periodicals, p. 50.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁶No. 2, for example, has verse by Prior and Dryden, an imitation of the ninth Ode of Horace, and two articles concerning the ancient-modern controversy.

¹⁷Graham, p. 16.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 60.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 65.

²⁰Graham, "Some Predecessors of the Tatler," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, XXIV (1934), 553-4.

²¹Ibid., 554.

²²Hugh H. Walker, The English Essay and Essayists, p. 6.

²³Ibid., p. 16.

²⁴"The Spectator Tradition and the Development of the Familiar Essay," ELH XIII (1946), 192.

²⁵Ibid., 192-3.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUNDS AND CHARACTERS OF THE FICTITIOUS EDITORS

It has been said that Steele and Addison, in creating the characters for their periodicals, approached the novel.¹ Certainly at times there is a real similarity between Bickerstaff or Mr. Spectator and, say, one of Defoe's first-person narrators. But the fictitious editor will always be distinguishable by the fact that he is not a consistently maintained entity in himself: he is a device, developed for the express purpose of performing certain functions for the writers. For this purpose, however, he was given an elaborate background and character, described with an obvious respect for the persuasive powers of circumstantial realism; which made him not only suitable for his functions, but interesting and even believable as well.

Of course the complex mask was not worked out immediately. Isaac Bickerstaff begins simply as a familiar name, with certain familiar characteristics, all borrowed.² From this rather hazy figure in the early Tatler, through a process of experimentation and inspiration, the fictitious editor emerges as a carefully constructed, quite fully-developed personality.

We know nothing about Bickerstaff from the first number of the Tatler except that he is an astrologer who frequents the various coffee-houses from which his lucubrations will be addressed. Gradually his environment is increased: coffee-shops, playhouses, even actual local characters such as Kidney, a waiter at St. James's coffee-house, are all mentioned in passing. In a letter from Will's, Bickerstaff remarks, "After the play [in this case, The Country Wife, acted at Drury Lane], we naturally stroll to this coffee-house . . . (No. 3);" and in one instance a ludicrous procession of the philosopher and some country friends is vividly described passing out the door of his residence, onto Sheer-lane "at the upper end of which I lodge," to Temple bar; stopping at Ben Tooke's, a bookseller's, and finally coming to rest at Dick's coffee-house.³

In No. 10 Isaac is given a half-sister, Jenny Distaff, who provides us with some hints about his character, and who employs much of his time as he arranges and later oversees her marriage.⁴ In No. 11, the 'Genealogy of the Staffs' is given, and in No. 13 Isaac acquires his familiar spirit,

Pacelot. Bickerstaff himself gradually emerges through his own accounts and through discussion by and of Jenny.⁵ We learn something of his history by such things as a short life given in No. 89, and the account of an unsuccessful love affair in No. 107. After No. 105, many of his papers are addressed from Sheer-lane, where he is a member of a club at the Trumpet. By the last number of the Tatler we have quite a distinct picture of him though it is not always consistent.⁶

After the trial run with Bickerstaff, the development of the fictitious editor and his background is more confidently handled. Mr. Spectator, for example, was obviously conceived from the first as a total character, as is evidenced by his two justly famous opening papers. He begins the first number with a history of his birth, upbringing, education, and travels, all giving evidence of his taciturnity, for, as he says therein:

I have observed, that a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure, till he knows whether the writer of it be a black or a fair man, of a mild or choleric disposition, married or a bachelor, with other particulars of the like nature, that conduce very much to the right understanding of an author.

The second number is entirely devoted to an account of the Spectator Club which, of course, consisted of Sir Roger de Coverley, the whimsical old Tory country gentleman; an unnamed member of the Inner Temple who is a critic; Sir Andrew Freeport, a Whig merchant; Captain Sentry, a soldier who has been retarded in his preferment by his modesty; Will Honeycomb, the decayed beau who does much to enliven the conversation of the group; and a clergyman who appears seldom, due to poor health. All of the members appear at some time in later numbers, but the only one used to any extent is Sir Roger who, of course, was a tremendous success.

The Spectator, like Bickerstaff, roams through London, attending the theatre and visiting specific places. He even reports being approached by a young prostitute "the other evening passing along near Covent-garden, . . . as [he] turned into the piazza, on the right hand coming out of James-street . . ." (No. 266). He now finally lodges with a widow "who has a great many children and complies with [his] humour in every thing," after having had a number of unhappy encounters with landlords who were too kind, or too good-natured (No. 12). In No. 17 we are informed of the shortness of his

face, and at intervals, we are given various revelations concerning his habits and gentle temperament, though on the whole, these are widely scattered after the first hundred numbers. There is no Jenny Distaff to describe him, so the picture we have of Mr. Spectator comes entirely from his own self-revelations which are usually given to introduce, conclude, or illustrate his speculations. "When I am in a serious humour, I very often walk by myself in Westminster Abbey. . .," he says, and fills a paper with reflections upon it (No. 26). He writes about wrestling because "being a person of insatiable curiosity, [he] could not forbear going [to see the ones in the Bear-garden]" (No. 436). Having discussed the vice of breaking small promises, he admits: "I am the more severe upon this vice, because I have been so unfortunate as to be a very great criminal myself . . ." (No. 448).

The second series of the Spectator follows the same pattern, with the introduction of the "editor" in the first number; only this time we are informed of the Spectator's deciding to reject his ancient taciturnity and open his mouth. The disposal of the club before the close of the first series of course necessitated the establishment of a new one, and we have throughout (though to a lesser extent) the same type of detail given to make the fictitious editor "human":

It has been my custom, as I grow old, to allow myself in some little indulgencies, which I never took in my youth. Among others is my after-noon's nap, which I fell into in the fifty-fifth year of my age, and have continued for the three last years past, (No. 599)

Nestor Ironside's character is not described until the second number of the Guardian (the first being devoted essentially to a description of the type of material that would appear in the paper) when we are given the elaborate history of his coming to have the position of guardian to the Lizard family. This account which, with its first-person narration and preciseness of detail, actually reads very much like the beginning of a story or novel, establishes a fictitious framework which is even more complex than that in the Spectator (though, in fact, it is used less, there being no serious equivalent to the de Coverley papers). Nestor explains:

I am to let the reader know, that his chief entertainment will arise from what passes at the tea-table of my Lady Lizard.

.
As there is no circumstance in human life, which may not

directly or indirectly concern a woman thus related, there will be abundant matter offer itself from passages in this family, to supply my readers with diverting, and perhaps useful notices for their conduct in all the incidents or human life. (No. 2)

As the Spectator club contained members from many professions, the Lizard family contains members of many temperaments. The women of the family, further described in No. 5, include Lady Lizard who is an attractive, prudent, and polite widow; and her daughters in order of age from the oldest to youngest: Jane who is twenty-three and in love, Annabella who is witty and cunning, Cornelia who is studious, Betty who is a gossip, and Mary who is good-natured and generous. The sons are Sir Harry Lizard, a prudent and plain man of good understanding (he is described in No. 6); Thomas, a good-natured diplomat who is grooming himself for the court; William, an inquisitive mind who is studying law in the Temple; and John, a fellow of All-Soul's College in Oxford, studying divinity (these last described in No. 13). Oddly enough, except for the details about his birth-place and education given in No. 2 and a few other scattered fragments, we are told little about Nestor himself in the Guardian. We must wait for the Englishman, where the "editor" concentrates on Ironside, saying nothing about himself except that he has inherited the tools of the trade from his predecessor, and intends to make him "The Nerve of my Story". He informs his readers that "my future Papers should chiefly consist of what I learned from the conversation of Mr. Ironside" (No. 19). Even some of the Lizard family appear here, for the 'Englishman' has been lately introduced "to the Acquaintance of the Family of the Lizards: I usually pass my evenings among them" (No. 19). In this case, then, the "editor" is ignored, but a fictitious framework is imported which serves somewhat the same purpose. In the second series, however, there is no attempt at all to establish anything of the kind.

In the Lover, though the periodical is advertised as an imitation of the Tatler, the fictitious editor and his acquaintances are established in the opening numbers, after the manner of the Spectator. Myrtle even has a club of five assistants: ". . . Persons whose Conduct of Life has turned upon the Incidents which have occurred to them from this agreeable or lamentable Passion [love] as they respectively are apt to call it, from

the Impression it has left upon their Imaginations, and which mingles in all their Words and Actions" (No. 1). This fictitious framework, however, is seldom used.

Although the club was vaguely remembered in No. 27, only Oswald of the middle-aged members is ever mentioned again (No. 29). Even young Severn, designed to be 'the hero of my story' is almost lost sight of . . . Myrtle, however, . . . is consistently portrayed; and his sweetheart, Mrs. Ann Page, is never quite forgotten (Nos. 2, 5, 7, 10, 12, 17, 18, 19, 28, 30, 37, 40). Mr. Johnson, the family man, whose domestic life Steele intended to portray in 'future discourses' was not found useful in The Lover but turned up, name and all, with his 'excellent wife' and 'numerous offspring' as a central fictional device in Town-Talk (1715-16), and again briefly in Chit-Chat (1716).⁷

In the Theatre, after a period in which there were a number of publications with no real fictitious editor⁸ (the 'Reader' is not described beyond his statement that he has almost read himself blind, and now intends to combat the scribblers of the age with a truthful paper) there is a reversion to the old form, as Sir John Edgar gives a rather full account of the revival of his interest in the theatre. He also describes his son and the frequenters of the tea-table of Sophronia, who is a sort of equivalent to Lady Lizard in gentility and sophistication. Sir John's name, incidentally, was taken from the character in an early draft of The Conscious Lovers who was changed to 'Sir John Bevil' when the play was produced.⁹

It may be seen from these examples that a pattern of development seems to have been formulated during the run of the Tatler which was followed in the Spectator and after: the proposed plan of the paper is given in the opening numbers, along with a detailed description of the "editor" and often his background, which consisted of the history of his life, sometimes the location of his lodgings, and usually an account of his associates, who appear at intervals throughout. Though he may not give much more detailed information of himself, the "editor" constantly reports his activities and his conversation, making the whole thing believable with vivid references to familiar people and places.

In proceeding to a discussion of the actual characters of the fictitious editors, it is necessary to pause again and explain that some of the minor productions will receive little comment here. The reason for this neglect is, of course, that the "editors" thereof are developed very little or

not at all. Town-Talk and Chit-Chat, because they utilize the letter form, do not include a description of the writer, though they do, as we have seen, have a light framework of fictitious characters. The 'Whig Examiner', 'Reader', and 'Englishman' (of the second series) are nothing but pseudonyms. 'Englishman I', we observed, says little of himself, but concentrates on Nestor Ironside, and the 'Freeholder' only defines his station in life. However 'Englishman I' is a symbol of sorts. Perhaps the readers must fill in their own image of him. We know nothing of his physiognomy and little about his habits, but we do, after a few numbers, know his attitudes. He is a Whig: a strong anti-Catholic, anti-Jacobite Protestant who favours a hard line with the French; a lover of trade and commerce who lauds the balance of power between Government, People, and King. The 'Freeholder' is much the same: a Whig Englishman and proud of it.

As a British freeholder, I should not scruple taking place of a French marquis; and when I see one of my countrymen amusing himself in his little cabbage-garden, I naturally look upon him as a greater person than the owner of the richest vineyard in Champagne. (No. 1)

But these provide little material for us, now or hereafter, and so, having dismissed them, let us proceed with some observations on the character of those more interesting philosophers of the Tatler, Spectator, Guardian, Lover, and Theatre, beginning with their personal, superficial characteristics.

A correspondent once said to the Spectator: "You know very well that our nation is more famous for that sort of men who are called 'whims' and 'humourists' than any other country in the world. . ." (No. 371). Certainly the literature of the day was full of these types of character, and Steele and Addison's "editors" were no exception. Bickerstaff emerges as an eccentric old astrologer who, after predicting his own death, includes a humorous will in the seventh number of his paper. The short biography which he gives in No. 89 helps to establish his eccentricity, and perhaps shows that he is in some ways an alter-ego for Steele, the Irishman and ex-soldier:

It is remarkable, that I was bred by hand, and eat nothing but milk until I was a twelve-month old; from which time, to the eighth year of my age, I was observed to delight in pudding and potatoes; and indeed I retain a benevolence for that sort of food to this day. I do not remember that I distinguished myself in any thing

at those years, but by my great skill at law, for which I was so barbarously used, that it has ever since given me an aversion to gaming. In my twelfth year, I suffered very much for two or three false concords. At fifteen I was sent to the university, and stayed there for some time; but a drum passing by, being a lover of music, I inlisted myself for a soldier. As years came on, I began to examine things, and grew discontented at the times. This made me quit the sword, and take to the study of the occult sciences, in which I was so wrapped up, that Oliver Cromwell had been buried, and taken up again, five years before I heard he was dead. This gave me first the reputation of a conjuror, which has been of great disadvantage ever since, and kept me out of all public employments.

He is a quack physician (No. 34), a projector of various schemes (No. 125), and even a tragedian who has enough material "to finish a very sad one by the fifth of next month" (No. 22). He is also a proud esquire and family man (No. 11), of "a very spare and hectic constitution" (No. 254) and "a saturnine and melancholy complexion" (No. 134).

The whimsical Mr. Spectator, until the second series of his paper, is incredibly taciturn and sober. Indeed he is so silent, ". . . that the few who are intimate with me, answer my smiles with concurrent sentences, and argue to the very point I shook my head at without my speaking" (No. 4). The brilliant opening number, of course, reports the early symptoms of this humour, for, as a baby ". . . I threw away my rattle before I was two months old, and would not make use of my coral 'till they had taken away the bells from it;" and as a school-boy: "I had the reputation of a very sullen youth, but was always a favourite of my school-master, who used to say, 'that my parts were solid and would wear well'."

I had not been long at the university, before I distinguished myself by a most profound silence; for during the space of eight years, excepting in the public exercises of the college, I scarce uttered the quantity of an hundred words; and indeed do not remember that I ever spoke three sentences together in my whole life. Whilst I was in this learned body, I applied myself with so much diligence to my studies, that there are very few celebrated books, either in the learned or the modern tongues, which I am not acquainted with.

He does not give his name, age, and lodgings because "they would indeed draw me out of that obscurity which I have enjoyed for many years, and

expose me in public places to several salutes and civilities, which have been always very disagreeable to me; for the greatest pain I can suffer, is the being talked to, and being stared at." In No. 101, he favours us with such an account of himself as he imagines a future historian would give; which will serve as an admirable summary:

We know very little of the name or person of this author, except only that he was a man of a very short face, extremely addicted to silence, and so great a lover of knowledge, that he made a voyage to Grand Cairo for no other reason but to take the measure of a pyramid. His chief friend was one Sir Roger De Coverley, a whimsical country knight, and a Templar, whose name he has not transmitted to us. He lived as a lodger at the house of a widow-woman, and was a great humourist in all parts of his life.

Marmaduke Myrtle of the Lover, is the epitome of an "humourous" sufferer from love-melancholy, remaining ever faithful to a woman who has married another man (a development and expansion of the situation of Sir Roger de Coverley with his "perverse widow"):

Mrs. Ann Page had such a Turn with her Neck, when I, thinking no harm, first looked upon her, that I was soon after in a Fever, and had like to have left a World (which I ever since despised) and been at Rest. But as Mrs. Ann's Parents comply'd with her own Passion for a Gentleman of much greater Worth and Fortune than myself, all that was left for me was to lament or get rid of my Passion by all the Diversions and Entertainments I could. But I thank Mrs. Ann (I am still calling her by her Maiden Name) she has always been Civil to me, and permitted me to stand Godfather at the Baptism of one of her Sons.

This would appear a very humble Favour to a Man of ungovern'd Desire; but as for me, as soon as I found Mrs. Ann was engaged, I could not think of her with Hope any longer, any other ways than that I should ever be ready to express the Passion I had for her, by Civilities to any thing that had the most remote relation to her. (No. 2)

Though all of the "editors" are eccentric or whimsical in some ways, Myrtle and especially Bickerstaff, are rather unique in that they are often ludicrous; the former in the extent of his languishing faithfulness; the latter in his pride, ridiculous schemes, and occasionally in his conduct. Mr. Spectator, though he is whimsical, maintains a constant dignity. Nestor Ironside is more serious still, as a comparison of the opening numbers of the papers will show, and his production is definitely more sombre.

But Bickerstaff, in many of his statements, predictions, proposals, and actions, is a figure of fun himself; an inciter of laughter, not just smiles, as Mr. Spectator is. No where in the Spectator, Guardian, or Theatre, would a slap-stick scene occur, such as that in Tatler 45, where Bickerstaff entertains himself with three "merry fellows":

'Well,' says Tom Bellfrey, 'you scholars, Mr. Bickerstaff, are the worst company in the world.' -- 'Ay,' says his opposite, 'you are dull to-night; pr'ythee be merry.' With that I huzzaed, and took a jump across the table, then came clever upon my legs, and fell a-laughing. 'Let Mr. Bickerstaff alone,' says one of the honest fellows; 'when he is in a good humour, he is as good company as any man in England.' He had no sooner spoke but I snatched his hat off his head, and clapped it upon my own, and burst out a-laughing again: upon which we all fell a-laughing for half an hour. One of the honest fellows got behind me in the interim, and hit me a sound slap on the back; upon which he got the laugh out of my hands: and it was such a twang on my shoulders that I confess he was much merrier than I. I was half angry; but resolved to keep up the good-humour of the company; and after halooing as loud as I could possibly, I drank off a bumper of claret, that made me stare again.

Scenes like this are not uncommon in the Tatler, and a comparison of this with, say, the De Coverley papers of the Spectator, will show the difference in type of humour. But more will be said of this in Chapter III, where further evidence of the ludicrous nature of Bickerstaff will be given.

After these distinguishing characteristics, there are a number of qualities which may be seen in all of the major fictitious editors. That they are scholars will already have been noticed from some of the passages quoted above, and that they are men of leisure, with independent means, may be seen from most of the opening numbers. In addition they are, generally speaking, aging bachelors.¹⁰ Bickerstaff is "now passed [his] grand climacteric, being sixty-four years of age" (No. 59). Though he is popular with the ladies, and though he grows rapturous over a letter from a female admirer (all the while lamenting his age),¹¹ he remains a gentle, melancholy old bachelor, reflecting on the fact that ". . . whenever I go off I shall leave no traces behind me" as he returns to his only family--his maid, his dog, and his cat--"who can only be the better or worse for what happens to me" (No. 95). He reveals his years when he requests: "The

lady who has chosen Mr. Bickerstaff for her Valentine and is at a loss what to present him with, is desired to make him, with her own hands, a warm night-cap" (No. 137). Mr. Spectator, introducing a letter by a hen-pecked husband, explains that "There are in the following letter matters, which I, a bachelor, cannot be supposed to be acquainted with . . ." (No. 176). Sir John Edgar, who, in a sense, has been revitalized by his son, is sixty-one (No. 1), and, though we must go to the Englishman, we will find that Nestor Ironside "is now in the _____ Year of his Age, in perfect Health, of a gay Disposition, although tainted with some of the Vices, or rather Infirmities of his Time of Day; a great Frequenter of young Company, with a secret but strong Affectation to be pleasing in the Eyes of Women" (No. 16).

Most of the "editors" also exhibit a tendency to be old-fashioned in their opinions and tastes. Bickerstaff for instance, has "a fondness for the fashions and manners which prevailed when I was young and in fashion myself," and he adds: "They tell me I am old: I am glad I am so: for I do not like your present young ladies" (No. 61). Jenny, of course, considers him a prig, and says so in Tatler 10. The Guardian, who in the old-fashioned manner places a great deal of emphasis on the beauty of domesticity in women (as all of the "editors" do), says, ". . . I should be loath to have a poetess in the family . . ." (No. 15). Even the comparatively young Mr. Spectator, in No. 14, laments with nostalgia the passing of the innocent diversions of the old days.

In Guardian 49, Nestor Ironside mentions "the tranquility and cheerfulness with which I have passed my life." All of the fictitious editors may boast of this, for though they are all rather sober (with the exception, at times, of Bickerstaff), they are generally light-hearted. Mr. Spectator explains their mood very well when he asserts that he prefers cheerfulness to mirth (No. 381). They are, as well, a rather self-satisfied lot, proud of themselves and their accomplishments. Bickerstaff observes:

When I look into the frame and constitution of my own mind, there is no part of it which I observe with greater satisfaction, than that tenderness and concern which it bears for the good and happiness of mankind. (No. 117)

After an audience in which he judges applications for permission to use canes, he says, "I finished my session with great content of mind, reflecting

upon the good I had done. . . , " and he later speaks of reading his paper with great satisfaction.¹² Mr. Spectator gives an account of the success of his project and recommends it highly to his readers, saying, "It is with much satisfaction that I hear this great city inquiring day by day after these my papers, and receive [sic] my morning lectures with a becoming seriousness and attention" (No. 10). The Guardian extends his pride to include the accomplishments of the whole Bickerstaff-Spectator-Ironside family, for, he brags, ". . . this way of writing diurnal papers has not succeeded for any space of time in the hands of any persons who are not of our line" (No. 98). Even Marmaduke Myrtle describes his paper as "The great Work which I have begun for the Service of the more polite Part of this Nation," and says in compliment to himself:

It is a very great satisfaction to one who has put himself upon the Platonick Foot, to look calmly on, while Carnivorous Lovers run about howling for Hunger, which the intellectual and more abstracted Admirer is never gnaw'd with. (No. 30)

But it is in their motives for writing, and their attitudes, that the fictitious editors are most alike; and it is in these, as well, that they are least fictitious, because they represent the views of the authors. All of these men are patriotic, not only politically (in this, of course, the "editors" of the political papers are extreme) but morally. That is, they are concerned with the welfare of the British people, and they all are like Bickerstaff when he speaks of himself as "a great lover of mankind." Their endeavors are all engendered by a love of their ^ucontrymen, for, as Nestor Ironside explains, "I am always beating about in my thoughts for something that may turn to the benefit of my dear countrymen" (Guardian 102). They wish to better their society by reforming its manners and morals. Bickerstaff says that the purpose of his paper is to "expose the false arts of life, to pull off the disguises of cunning, vanity, and affectation, and to recommend a general simplicity in our dress, our discourse, and our behavior."¹³ The main purpose of the Guardian, according to Ironside, shall be (and it is interesting to notice the movement toward more serious intent, from concern with affectation to concern with immorality) "to protect the modest, the industrious; to celebrate the wise, the valiant; to encourage the good, the pious; to confront the impudent, the idle; to

contemn the vain, the cowardly; and to disappoint the wicked and profane" (No. 1). Marmaduke Myrtle's task is to "describe love in all its Shapes," and to warn people about its dangers; and "to delineate the true and unfeigned Delight, which virtuous Minds feel in the Enjoyment of their lawful and warranted Passions" (No. 32).

The interest of the fictitious editors in the reform of the people arises from an optimistic belief in the inherent good of society (as opposed, say, to Swift's view) and their confidence that a return to religion and to homely virtues will do much good. They have the concept, so common in the eighteenth century, of the harmonious universe, in which the whole of nature gives evidence of the wisdom and benevolence of God, for the benefit of man, top link in the chain of worldly being. Mr. Spectator, a true disciple of Locke, sees this in every part of nature,¹⁴ and it is for this reason that he has, as do all of his fellows, very little sympathy for free-thinkers. Their morality is based on strong Christian principles; in fact strong Puritan principles of constant occupation, frugality, and modesty. They expound the classic middle-class morality; the same as that expressed in such other familiar works of the time as Richardson's novels, or even more perfectly, Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield. Their papers recommending simplicity of dress, modesty,¹⁵ piety, and benevolence; and attacking lust, affectation, avarice, idleness, and free-thinking are too many and too familiar to enumerate.

But it is interesting to note their attitude toward reform. They are, as well as patriotic, good-natured and optimistic in their endeavors. Bickerstaff writes: "The vigilance, the anxiety, the tenderness, which I have for the good of the people of England, I am persuaded, will in time be much commended; but I doubt whether they will ever be rewarded. However, I must go on cheerfully in my work of reformation . . ." (Tatler 30). Mr. Spectator seems to express the philosophy of all when he says in No. 262:

No man is so sunk in vice and ignorance, but there are still some hidden seeds of goodness and knowledge in him; which give him a relish of such reflections and speculations as have an aptness to improve the mind, and make the heart better.

Their optimism is coupled with compassion as well, for Bickerstaff gives an account of a rake, in Tatler 27, which is actually sympathetic, understanding, and forgiving; and in No. 60 he describes with approval an incident in which a rake is reclaimed by his father's kindness. Mr. Spectator includes in No. 190 a letter "on the unhappy condition of women of the town," and in No. 266 discusses the miseries of prostitution. Here is no harsh invective against vice, but a sort of condescending, good-natured, sympathetic scolding. The Spectator, in fact, dislikes strong satire and hates to see the implements of it in the hands of an ill-natured man (No. 23). He will not write invective (No. 355), for he is, as all of Steele and Addison's editors are, a reformer of the mildest kind.

All of the fictitious editors announce themselves as censors of society, with varying degrees of arrogance. Bickerstaff quite brazenly declares himself Censor of Great Britain, and holds courts of honour at Sheer Lane, where he tries reported cases of bad conduct.¹⁶ In No. 162 he gives a full anniversary account of the office and his success therein. Mr. Spectator is less adamant; more of an observer than an outright censor, but he does try to protect the populace from immoral influences, and he sees himself especially as "a kind of guardian to the fair. . . always watchful to observe anything which concerns their interest" (No. 423). Nestor Ironside, though he is officially only the guardian of the Lizard Family, likes to consider himself as holding the more important office of Universal Guardian.

Many of the qualities that the "editors" have been seen to possess are specifically designed to make them suitable for, and acceptable as, censors. The office has been adopted by all concerned, in the first place, by virtue of the fact that they are mature and widely read; knowledgeable in the ways of the world through books, or experience, or both. Bickerstaff has, "besides the forces of my own parts, the power of divination" (No. 1). He is a learned philosopher and an aging man who has seen and experienced much. Mr. Spectator is widely read and widely travelled; a man who "left the University, with the character of an odd unaccountable fellow, that had a great deal of learning, if [he] would but show it" (No. 1).

It is common with me to run from book to book to
exercise my mind with many objects, and qualify

myself for my daily labours. (No. 491)

Besides having _____ years of experience in life, Nestor Ironside pursued the academic life at Oxford before coming to be guardian of the Lizards; and Marmaduke Myrtle, though he may not be a scholar of anything more than romances, is certainly qualified as a lover-consultant after so many years of experiencing the ravages of the passion. Sir John Edgar, having reached his sixty-first year, and having been re-introduced to the theatre, has been prevailed upon by Sophronia "to undertake (in this Publick Manner) the preservation and Improvement of the English Theatre. . ." (No. 1).

Curiously enough, all of the bachelor editors have had a try at love, and for some reason known only to Steele, they have all been unhappy in this part of their experience. Marmaduke Myrtle's case has already been reviewed, but Bickerstaff as well "received a wound that has still left a scar in [his] mind, never to be quite worn out by time and philosophy" when he was thirty years of age (Tatler 107). He cured himself by reflecting very unphilosophically on the faults of his false mistress, and rejoicing at the unhappiness of her marriage. The Spectator had a failure at love which was due largely to his taciturnity (No. 261), and though no details are given, we learn in Englishman 16, that even gentle old Nestor Ironside "had had a broken Heart." But none of them have been soured permanently against the fair sex. The Spectator, as we have seen, remains the steadfast patron of the ladies, and sister Jenny can now say of Bickerstaff:

My brother is of a complexion truly amorous; all his thoughts and actions carry in them a tincture of that obliging inclination; and this turn has opened his eyes to see, that we are not the inconsiderable creatures which unlucky pretenders to our favour would insinuate.
(Tatler 10)

Thus they have experienced love, and know of what they speak when discussing it, but they remain unmoved old bachelors, completely objective in their counseling, and this is part of a very important characteristic which they all exhibit, and to which we shall now turn.

Perhaps the most important quality of any censor is an unbiased nature. Certainly one of the favorite devices of the satirist is the persona who is an objective observer; a recluse, philosopher, or foreigner; a character who in some way is removed from involvement in the vices which he and the

author criticize. We need only think of Burton's Democritus Junior,¹⁷ of Gulliver in Lilliput and Laputa, of the 'Turkish Spy' and the 'Citizen of the World'. The subtitle of the Hermit, a contemporary periodical, was "view of the world by a person retired from it." In keeping with this position of objectivity, Steele and Addison made their "editors" too old, too reserved, too whimsical, or too wise to be tempted by many of the follies upon which they comment. In discussing subjects pertaining to the fair sex, for example, most of them profess a remarkable disinterest. Bickerstaff remarks: "He that is past the power of beauty may talk of this matter [the faults of women] with the same unconcern, as of any other subject" (No. 201). Mr. Spectator confesses, "I. . . know nothing of women but from seeing plays" (No. 51), and Ironside warns his exciting lady readers, "Every man is not sufficiently qualified with age and philosophy, to be an indifferent spectator of such allurements" (No. 100). He himself is happy that age and experience have armed him against such things as the temptations of the pastoral life (No. 22), and allowed him to see women as they really are:

An healthy old fellow, that is not a fool, is the happiest creature living. It is at that time of life only, men enjoy their faculties with pleasure and satisfaction. It is then we have nothing to manage, as the phrase is; we speak the downright truth, and whether the rest of the world will give us the privilege or not, we have so little to ask of them, that we can take it. I shall be very free with the women from this one consideration; and, having nothing to desire of them, shall treat them, as they stand in nature, and as they are adorned with virtue, and not as they are pleased to form and disguise themselves. (No. 26)

The indifference of the fictitious editors extends, for various reasons, to the lure of the material world as well. Isaac is involved in his occult arts. Mr. Spectator lives in the world "rather as a spectator of mankind than as one of the species. . . ."

. . . I have made my self a speculative statesman, soldier, merchant, and artizan, without ever meddling with any practical part in life. I am very well versed in the theory of an husband, or a father, and can discern the errors in the oeconomy, business and diversion of others, better than those who are engaged in them; as standers-by discover blots, which are apt to escape those who are in the game. (No. 1)

He adds: ". . .I have the high satisfaction of beholding all nature with an unprejudic'd eye; and having nothing to do with men's passions or interests, I can with the greater sagacity consider their talents, manners, failings, and merits" (No. 4). He is neutral in all things, including politics, and even in his criticism of the sexes, for he says, "I have neither spared the ladies out of complaisance, nor the men out of partiality . . ." (No. 319). In No. 270 he gives what is probably the definitive statement of his objectivity:

At least to me, who have taken pains to look at beauty abstracted from the consideration of its being the object of desire; at power, only as it sits upon another, without any hopes of partaking any share of it; at wisdom and capacity, without any pretensions to rival or envy its acquisitions. I say to me. . . this world is not only a mere scene, but a very pleasant one. Did mankind but know the freedom which there is in keeping thus aloof from the world, I should have [many] imitators.

Nestor Ironside, in the Guardian, also insists on the disinterest of his censorship:

. . .I am past all the regards of this life, and have nothing to manage with any person or party, but to deliver myself as becomes an old man with one foot in the grave, and one who thinks he is passing to eternity. All sorrows which can arrive at me are comprehended in the sense of guilt and pain; if I can keep clear of these two evils, I shall not be apprehensive of any other. Ambition, lust, envy, and revenge, are excrescences of the mind, which I have cut off long ago: but as they are excrescences which do not only deform, but also torment those on whom they grow, I shall do all I can to persuade all others to take the same measures for their cure which I have. (No. 1)

He professes great tenderness for the Lizard children, and suggests that his less emotional interest as a guardian might make him even better for them than a parent (this, of course, applies to his wider guardianship as well):

I do not knowbut my regards, in some considerations, have been more useful than those of a father; and as I wanted all that tenderness, which is the bias of inclination in men towards their own offspring, I have had a greater command of reason when I was to judge of what concerned my wards, and consequently was not prompted, by my partiality and fondness towards their persons, to

transgress against their interests. (No. 5)

Marmaduke Myrtle, as a direct result of his abortive amour, and like all Platonic lovers, scorns the world and all "Pursuits of Riches, Wealth and Power." Having had experience as a patient, he has now become a physician in love, and this is all that concerns him. People who devote themselves to "great Persons and Illustrious Actions" are amazed at his indifference, and "apt to think my Head turned, as well as I do theirs," for "if they will not own themselves mad, they must conclude that I am" (No. 2).

Of course, although he wants to be somehow not involved in the confusion of the world, the censor must be in a position to observe it readily; and in this regard, the "editors" here considered are also well suited. Bickerstaff is made invisible through the agency of Pacelot (No. 13) and a magic ring (No. 243) along with other supernatural devices, so that he may spy on the town. His age, as well, aids him in becoming a confidant, for one of his young female acquaintances points out: ". . . I think you have said, that men of your age are of no sex; therefore I may be as free with you as one of my own" (No. 109). Mr. Spectator, though he has no supernatural advantages, is an ideal observer who can frequent any company without alarming it, because of his obscurity and taciturnity.

. . . I move up and down the house and enter into all companies, with the same liberty as a cat or any other domestick animal, and am as little suspected of telling anything that I hear or see. (No. 12)

Unlike Bickerstaff, he cannot inspire confidence in the ladies by virtue of his age, but,

As my pleasures are almost wholly confined to those of sight, I take it for a peculiar happiness that I have always had an easie and familiar admittance to the fair sex. (No. 4)

In the world at large,

My obscurity and taciturnity leave me at liberty, without scandal, to dine, if I think fit, at a common ordinary, in the meanest as well as the most sumptuous house of entertainment. (No. 88)

In addition, of course, he can observe at his leisure the members of the Spectator Club, as Isaac did Jenny Distaff and the members at the Trumpet.

Nestor Ironside, by the same token, has ample opportunity to observe the world in miniature, in the person of the Lizard family and their friends. As a guardian he sees much, is confided in, and is respected and trusted. The Englishman spends much of his time concentrating on, and listening to, Nestor Ironside; and Marmaduke Myrtle restricts his observations to lovers. So the scope of the fictitious editors' observation varies, but all of them are observers, and all of them possess those qualities of wit, wisdom, philosophical objectivity, and intense interest in the welfare of the world which are necessary for censors of their type.

This account should give some idea, then, of the nature of the fictitious editor, and the care taken in his development, especially in the "literary" papers. The next will deal specifically with the reasons for his existence: the advantage to the authors of his use.

FOOTNOTES

¹See Walker, The English Essay and Essayists, p. 110.

²The acknowledged source is, of course, Swift's mask of the same name who had so successfully made a mockery of the astrologer and quack, John Partridge, in 1708. But Walter Graham adds: "Most writers have been satisfied to refer only to the pamphlets of Swift in this connection, but the fact that at least three other periodicals than the Tatler had made Partridge a subject of jest is certainly deserving of consideration." ("Some Predecessors of the Tatler," Journal of English and Germanic Philology XXIV (1925), 552.)

³Tatler 86.

⁴Nos. 75, 79, 85.

⁵Nos. 34, 36, 37, 38, 75, 85, 104, 143, 247.

⁶In No. 236, after he had made complimentary remarks about the Royal Society in previous papers (in No. 7 he spoke of them with respect), he suddenly turns and says: "They seem to be in a confederacy against men of polite genius, noble thought, and diffusive learning. . ."

Though he has carried on a campaign against duelling, he informs us, in No. 105, that he has taken up the sword himself, and he says, in a manner not befitting the picture he had drawn of himself as a philosopher: "Thus my life passes away in a restless pursuit of fame, and preparation to defend myself against such as attack it."

⁷Rae Blanchard, "Explanatory Notes to the Lover," in Steele's Periodical Journalism 1714-16, pp. 269-270.

⁸1715-20 in which years there occurred only the second series of the Englishman, the Freeholder, Town-Talk, Chit-Chat, and two other pamphlet series, the Plebeian and Old Whig, which are notable only in that they were written by Steele and Addison respectively, in opposition to each other over the Peerage Bill, shortly before Addison's death.

⁹The name was changed apparently because Steele was worried that 'Sir John Edgar' would carry political overtones, after the Theatre, which he did not want in his play.

¹⁰We are not sure of the first Spectator's age. In the second series (No. 599) he reveals that he is 58. Sir John Edgar appears to be a widower.

¹¹Tatler 83.

¹²Nos. 103 and 106 respectively.

¹³In the Dedication, to Maynwaring, of the first bound volume of the Tatler.

¹⁴See, as only one example of many, Spectator 519.

¹⁵Their attitude toward women and modesty is interesting: a sort of condescending benevolence coupled with rather harsh stigmas. See Bickerstaff's advice to Jenny (Tatlers 75, 79, 85), and the following:

. . .I must tell my female readers, and they may take an old man's word for it, that there is nothing in woman so graceful and becoming as modesty. (Tatler 84)

. . . regard to decency is a great rule of life in general, but more especially to be consulted by the female world(Spectator 342)

If a man loses his honour in one rencounter, it is not impossible for him to regain it in another: a slip in a woman's honour is irrecoverable. (Spectator 99)

¹⁶Nos. 250, 253, 256, 259, 262, 265.

¹⁷There is, in fact, a remarkable similarity between Democritus Junior, according to the portrait he gives of himself in the beginning of the Anatomy of Melancholy, and the type of figure that Steele and Addison create as their fictitious editors. The motto for the Tatler from Juvenal has already been noticed, and it is interesting that it also occurs in Burton, translated here as: "Whate'er men do, vows, fears, in ire, in sport/Joys, wand'rings, are the sum of my report" (Burton, Anatomy of Melancholy, p. 12.). But most striking are Democritus' comments on his removal from the world which are so similar to some of those given already, and to be given, in this chapter. Here are some:

I have lived a silent, sedentary, solitary, private life, with myself and the muses in the University. . .nearly to old age, to learn wisdom . . . and penned up most part in my study. (Ibid., p. 13)

I have no wife nor children, good or bad, to provide for. A mere Spectator of other men's fortunes and adventures. . . . (Ibid., p. 14)

I did sometimes laugh and scoff with Lucian, and satirically tax with Menippus (Ibid., p. 15)

CHAPTER III

THE VALUE OF THE DEVICE

The complexity of a literary mask depends on the purpose of the author, and the effect he wishes to achieve with it. In its most primitive form it may be little more than another name, or, as something more elaborate, it may assume definite opinions, sometimes ironically contrary to the author's, sometimes similar to his, but expressed in a manner which he could not himself acknowledge. At its most complex, the mask might become a living character with a history, physical and mental characteristics, and fully-described habits; an integral part of the work instead of simply an advantageous point of view. As we have seen, the fictitious editors used by Steele and Addison varied in their complexity, and one or more of them probably fall into each of these categories (though the use of them for purposes of intense irony, after the manner of "A Modest Proposal," is rare).

The value of the fictitious editor was three-fold. There were a number of practical advantages to be gained directly by the authors themselves, arising from the protection which the use of the device provided--even the simplest served for this--and there were some very real artistic or aesthetic benefits afforded especially by the creation of an elaborate character. In addition, the use of the device allowed the authors to assume a certain tactically favourable position which was desirable in works designed to be censorious or persuasive. Thus, the fictitious editor both disguised the authors and contributed to the quality and effect of the papers. In a complex mask, of course, these functions are fused, but for the sake of convenience, the following discussion will be divided into separate accounts of them.

I. Anonymous publication was a key quality in all of the periodicals of Addison and Steele, and the guise of anonymity was preserved even when the identity of the real editors was widely suspected. The most obvious reason for an author publishing anything anonymously is, of course, to protect himself from any abuse which individuals or parties might direct against him, were his name known. This type of publication was very common

in eighteenth-century journalism, especially before and shortly after the turn of the century. The reason for this is obvious if we remember some of the examples of prosecutions involving printers and writers, such as that concerning John Twyn, in 1663, who, for writing a pamphlet attacking the law, was

. . . sentenced to be hanged by the neck, cut down before he was dead, shamefully mutilated and his entrails taken out; 'and you still living, the same to be burnt before your eyes, your head to be cut off, and your head and quarters to be disposed of at the pleasure of the King's Majesty'. Most of the sentence was executed and the fragments of his body were exhibited on Ludgate, Aldersgate and the other gates of the city as an example to others who dabbled in the same black art.¹

Such extreme punishment died with the Stuart reign, but as late as 1702, for writing "The Shortest Way With The Dissenters," Defoe was fined, stood in the pillory and jailed; and John Tutchin, a Whig propagandist (Observer, 1702), though he survived a legal action, was later "waylaid by unknown assailants and beaten so cruelly that he died of his wounds,"² Certainly by 1709, the literary climate had changed markedly, but it may have been memories of incidents like this, only seven years past, which encouraged Steele to assume a mask for his trial run at the periodical essay. Even in 1710 "lampooning had attained such proportions that it was with some difficulty that the public could be persuaded that the Spectator contained no hidden meanings or covert attacks."³ Steele, in fact, did lose his job as Gazetteer for "writing a Tatler . . . against Mr. Harley"⁴ and, in 1714, was expelled from the Commons for writing The Crisis and articles for the Englishman. It is even conceivable that the possibility of personal attack by irate readers might have caused some concern. Bickerstaff's announcement that he was practising with the sword for his own protection (Tatler 94), in spite of his numerous lectures against duelling, might have been not entirely a joke.

Of course we know, from hindsight, that neither the Tatler nor Spectator could have been considered politically dangerous, but Addison and Steele were always extremely careful to remind readers of their neutrality, of their care to offend no one, and of the fact that their papers contained no

personal attacks.⁵ Though the need for protection from actual physical or political violence was vastly reduced, it is possible that the revolution in the status of writers had been so rapid that "those who lived through it often failed to appreciate the new world they had entered."⁶ This would then have been a factor in Steele's originally deciding to use a persona; and his growing realization of the security of his position would account for the fact that, as the works progressed, less and less care was taken to conceal the identity of the real editor.

Though it was probably soon realized that there was actually little need to fear for the physical well-being of those responsible for the editing of the periodicals, there were other things to be considered: the reputation and the dignity of the authors concerned. It must be remembered that, at least for the first few numbers of each of the periodicals (after which they had been established as successful), the identities of the authors were effectively concealed by the use of the fictitious editor device. While embarking each time on schemes that they could not be sure would be successful, Steele and Addison were protecting their reputations by remaining anonymous until the results could be observed. There was always the possibility of malicious defamation by envious hack-writers to be feared, as well. Addison complains in the Freeholder, No. 40:

It requires no small degree of resolution to be an author, in a country so facetious and satirical as this of Great Britain. Such a one raises a kind of alarm among his fellow subjects, and by pretending to distinguish himself from the herd, becomes a mark of public censure, and sometimes a standing object of raillery and ridicule. How often do we see a person, whose intentions are visibly to do good by the works which he publishes, treated in as scurrilous a manner as if he were an enemy to mankind! All the little scramblers after fame fall upon him, publish every blot in his life, depend upon hearsay to defame him, and have recourse to their own invention, rather than suffer him to erect himself into an author with impunity. Even those who write on the most indifferent subjects, and are conversant only in works of taste, are looked upon as men that make a kind of insult upon society, and ought to be humbled as disturbers of the public tranquility.

With the use of the fictitious editor, each author, at the actual time of

writing, was anonymous, and many of the individual papers could not, and can not to this day, be attributed with certainty to any one contributor.

My paper among the republic of letters is the Ulysses's bow, in which every man of wit or learning may try his strength. One who does not care to write a book without being sure of his abilities, may see by this means if his parts and talents are to the public taste.

.
. . . it gives a timorous writer, and such is every good one, an opportunity of putting his abilities to the proof, and of sounding the public before he launches into it. (Guardian 98)

This declaration by Nestor Ironside is reinforced by the following comment, by Rae Blanchard, concerning the Englishman:

Following the earlier tradition the journal was anonymous, the spokesman, that is to say the 'Englishman', understood to be a relative of the 'Guardian'. But Steele made no secret whatever of his editorship of the 1713 series, both the first and last papers and also any others considered bluntly outspoken bearing his signature. Anonymity was employed only as a conventional device; none the less it proved useful as a shield for the correspondents whose identities were never revealed.⁷

And so, although Steele was rather casual about concealing his identity, the device did provide for himself and his associates as much protection as they needed, when they needed it: at the moment of the printing of the paper; so that Addison could say, in Spectator 451:

. . . there are few works of genius that come out first with the author's name. The writer generally makes a trial of them in the world before he owns them; and, I believe, very few, who are capable of writing, would set pen to paper, if they knew beforehand that they must not publish their productions [anonymously]. For my own part, I must declare, the papers I present the public are like fairy favours, which shall last no longer than while the author is concealed.

However, after all this, we are still faced with the paradoxical fact that, for the major authors and the editors, the attempt to remain anonymous was not always successful, indeed very often not even serious. In a letter to Pope, dated 17 May, 1709, Wycherly remarks (and he could not have seen more than seventeen Tatlers):

. . . the Coffee-houses. . . are now entertained, with

a whimsical new Newspaper, from and to the Coffee houses, called the Tatler, which I suppose you have seen, and is written by one Steel^{13, 14}, who thinks himself sharp upon this Iron Age . . . and who likewise, writes the other gazettes, and this under the Name of Bickerstaff. . . .⁸

By the last numbers of the Spectator, "the secret [of authorship] originally known by an inner circle of friends, had become common property."⁹ In the Theatre No. 11, Sir John Edgar makes a weak attempt to refute the charge that he is an alias for Sir Richard Steele, but apparently the fact was widely known. In the late numbers of many of the periodicals, the practice of acknowledging the contributions from other hands, as in Spectators 501 and 506, was common, and indeed the fictitious natures of the "editors" themselves are hinted at more than once. Bickerstaff, in Tatler 81, dreams of being almost accepted into the ranks of the heroes of dubious existence in the Table of Fame--he is rejected in favor of Robin Hood. Tickell's poem in Spectator 532 is entitled "To the Supposed Author of the Spectator." In the Reader, which ran concurrently with the Lover, both by Steele, we are told, ". . . the Lover is a cheat, for he is a married man" (No. 1). Thus a sort of game is played, by which we are first encouraged quite seriously to believe in the "editor" as one, real person, and then given hints to the contrary. Each of the papers probably began with nearly complete anonymity, but the circle of connaissance widened slowly from close friends to the general public. When the real editors became generally known, it was time to stop.

Steele did finally acknowledge his authorship in the final numbers of all his papers. He often revealed the identity of other contributors as well, and at the end of the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian, made it quite clear, without mentioning the name, that Addison was the second major contributor. Addison, however, always insisted that his name be withheld, in spite of the fact that his contributions were well known and admired. The result was a rather peculiar situation, that Smithers called a "curious combination of identification and anonymity." He gives this possible reason for it:

This continued insistence upon a formal anonymity when the secret of authorship had become well known, could not be attributed to any doubts as ~~the~~ the reputation which the Spectator might carry with it. It is therefore

worth remembering that Addison had observed of Cato that he acquired more fame the less he sought it. And while he may have acted with an exaggerated modesty from a belief that such was the correct course by the highest standards, or merely because it was congenial to him to do so, he also undoubtedly thought that as virtue in general pays material dividends, so modesty in particular is an excellent publicity medium.¹⁰

Of course the motives for concealing one's identity need not always be grave. The use of the mask simply allowed a certain amount of licence. There was certainly some amusement to be had, not only from laughing at others with some impunity, but also from such tricks as excusing one's faulty spelling in the following manner:

. . . a shaking hand does not always write legibly, the press sometimes prints one word for another; and when my paper is revised, I am perhaps so busy observing the spots of the moon, that I have not time to find out the Errata that are crept into my Lucubrations. (Tatler 101)

If a subject grew tiresome, and was perhaps dull to begin with, it might be concluded abruptly with,

N. B. Mr. Bickerstaff is taken extremely ill with the tooth-ache, and cannot proceed in this discourse. (Tatler 175)

If it was difficult to find anything at all to say, a number might be begun in this manner:

A man of business . . . may sometimes leave his guests, and beg them to divert themselves as well as they can until his return. I shall here make use of the same privilege, being engaged in matters of some importance relating to the family of the Bickerstaffs, and must desire my readers to entertain one another until I can have the leisure to attend them. I have therefore furnished out this paper, as I have done some few others, with letters of my ingenious correspondents, which, I have reason to believe, will please the public as much as my own elaborate lucubrations. (Tatler 228)

One might even use, if he dared, love letters which he had written to his wife, as Steele did in Spectator 142.

Addison's and Steele's censor of manners was also, to a more limited extent but apparently quite effectively, an arbiter of public taste who, as a fictitious person, "might condemn those who disapproved him, and extol

his own performances without giving offence."¹¹ The fictitious editors certainly did condemn those who (like the Examiner,) disapproved them, and they were by no means loath to report the success of their own lucubrations.¹² But, more significantly, they were unabashed promoters for Addison, Steele, and friends. Congreve's Old Bachelor is advertised in Tatler 9 as "a comedy of deserved reputation." In Tatler 120, there is the following puff for a benefit for Dogget:

I have this morning received the following Letter
from the famous Mr. Thomas Dogget.

"Sir,

"On Monday next will be acted, for my benefit, the Comedy of Love for Love. If you will do me the honour to appear there, I will publish on the bills, that it is to be performed at the request of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, and question not but it will bring me as great an audience, as ever was at the house, since the Morocco Ambassador was there. I am, with the greatest respect, your most obedient and most humble servant,

Thomas Dogget"

Being naturally an encourager of wit, as well as bound to it in the quality of Censor, I returned the following answer:

"Mr. Dogget,

"I am very well pleased with the choice you have made of so excellent a play, and have always looked upon you as the best of comedians; I shall therefore come in between the first and second act, and remain in the right-hand box over the pit until the end of the fourth; provided you take care that everything be rightly prepared for my reception."

Who would not be pleased by an advertisement like this, especially since, as promised, "a person dressed for Isaac Bickerstaff did appear at the playhouse on this occasion"?¹³ The same was done for Escourt in Tatler 130.

There are flattering characters drawn of Wilks and Cibber (Tatler 182); a criticism of Pope's Essay on Criticism (Spectator 253) as well as compliments on the enlarged edition of The Rape of the Lock;¹⁴ strong praise of Phillip's The Distrest Mother (Spectator 290); publication and praise of poems by Tickell; a psalm by Sidney (Guardian 18); praise of Tom D'Urfey by Nestor Ironside who knew him well (No. 67); and a strong puff for a

translation by Budgell (Lover 39). Some of these men were, or had been, contributors to the periodicals; others were just friends. Though this was rather biased patronage, it could have been included with few misgivings in a signed periodical, but the use of the fictitious editor allowed the contributors, and the real editors, one further liberty: the praise of their own works; not just of material in the periodicals, but of plays and poems and pamphlets. Steele openly quoted, more than once, from "a little tract, called the Christian Hero,"¹⁵ He also praised The Crisis (Englishman 55), and his dramatic project, the Censorium (Town-Talk 4). Spectator 51 contains a clever advertisement-in-reverse of his first play The Funeral: a fictitious letter, supposedly from a young lady correspondent who deprecates the lack of taste in one scene. The passage criticized is anything but shocking, for The Funeral is a ponderously moral play, so the effect is one of ironic praise. Perhaps this was also an attempt to arouse a complimentary defence of the play from a real correspondent. In Spectator 338, there occurs a mock criticism of the prologue to The Distrest Mother (both prologue and criticism written by Steele) and a criticism of the merry epilogue which Budgell wrote for the same tragic drama. No. 341 contains an anonymous letter in defence of merry epilogues written, naturally, by Budgell himself. The Guardian and letters to him, and the second series of the Spectator, advertise and praise Cato extravagantly; and Town-Talk of February 13 promotes The Drummer.

This use of the fictitious editor as a supposedly objective censor, to advertise and praise one's own productions, was within the bounds of propriety for Addison, but he probably would never have permitted it had his name been linked with any certainty to the project. His modesty would definitely not have allowed him to praise his own works himself, even under the name of Spectator or Ironside; other people did it for him. Pope, of a less delicate sensibility, took full advantage of his opportunity and, writing as Nestor Ironside, in Guardian 40, extolled his own polite pastorals with beautiful irony at the expense of Phillips and Spenser. He resented the fact that Steele, in a series of articles on the pastoral, had forgotten him in praising Phillips. He therefore chose the most ludicrous examples of the rustic style that he could find and, as Ironside

(with a slap at Steele) commended them lavishly, concluding with an apology to himself for the previous neglect.

But the most pernicious exploiter of the fictitious editor's "disinterested" support was Steele, who used it not only as a means of advancing his works, as we have seen, but of defending his own character against attackers. This type of anonymous self-praise is mostly restricted to the later political papers, but there are signs of it earlier; usually humorous, self-conscious, and somewhat vague. The first open defense occurs in Guardian 53.

It happens that the letter, which was in one of my papers concerning a lady ill treated by the Examiner, and to which he replies by taxing the Tatler with the like practice, was written by one Steele, who put his name to the collection of papers called Lucubrations. It was a wrong thing in the Examiner to go any further than the Guardian for what is said in the Guardian; but since Steele owns the letter, it is the same thing. I apprehend, by reading the Examiner over a second time, that he insinuates, by the words close to the royal stamp, he would have the man turned out of his office. Considering he is so malicious, I cannot but think Steele has treated him very mercifully in his answer, which follows.

The answer is in the form of an open letter signed by Steele. We have here the beginnings of a pattern which will be used extensively in the future; Steele writing about himself in the disguise of the fictitious editor, and to himself in open letters when he wishes to make a point in an especially forceful manner. Nos. 30 and 46 of the Englishman contain letters by Steele to the "editor", and in No. 36, after a discourse by Nestor Ironside against the Examiner, Sir Richard is introduced in person:

The Sage was going on in his Discourse, when Mr. Button entered the Room, and told us, Mr. S_____le was come on his Crutches, after a Fit of the Gout, to wait upon Mr. Ironside. We all rose up to that ingenious Gentleman and began to make him our Compliments of Consolation upon all the Calumnies that had been published against him during his Indisposition: But that facetious Gentleman turned off the Discourse, told us, that he came in a Chair to that Place, and had exercised himself by the Way in the Virtue of bearing unjust Reproach. As, continued he, the Chairmen pressed through the People, all who were incommoded by their making way, seeing a fat Fellow in the Vehicle, cry'd out, Lazy

Booby, marry come up, carrying would become him better than being carried. When I met a Gentleman, I pull'd off my Hat, and told him I was lame, on which he turned his Sourness to a Smile. I could, said that great Philosopher, as easily answer all the Reproaches published against me, as that of Laziness in my Journey hither; but it would be great Arrogance to suppose the Publick have their Eyes so much upon me, as to be entertained with what concerned my personal Character. The Company was much pleased with the Modesty of so considerable a Man; and took much Satisfaction in observing the high Value Mr. Ironside put upon him, who placed him next the Fire, under Pretence that it was only in Consideration of his late Sickness.

The name is not fully spelled out here, and in fact Steele usually defended himself under some sort of allusive veil, (in Reader 6, his persona defends him openly). However it is in the Theatre, where Steele is fighting for his private interests,¹⁶ that he most blatantly makes use of this technique. Sir John Edgar is extensively used as a mask from behind which Steele can deliver most immodest self-justification and self-praise, coupled with harsh invective against his tormentors. No. 8 contains an open letter, signed by Steele, in defense of himself. Nos. 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 all contain comments by Sir John Edgar and correspondents concerning "Sir Richard Steele, a Person, whom, perhaps, I know less, but love more than any other Gentleman in England. . . ." All of them begin with the phrase "The injured Knight. . .," and express sentiments similar to this:

The injur'd Knight still wants my Favour and Protection, which I shall not deny him, till I see greater Persons concern themselves to do him Justice. (No. 11)

Nos. 14 and 26 include conversations between Steele and Sir John in which Steele laments his fate, and is mildly comforted, and sometimes chastised, by his persona. All are an amazing example of immodest self-justification, wonderfully ironic, delivered in what is perhaps the only manner that could preserve any of the author's dignity. No wonder Sir John should defend the moral use of the mask in No. 11, and deny being one himself.

The mystery attached to the authorship of the various papers and letters was, of course, a valuable stimulant of curiosity in the readers. Swift's friends, at least, were actively engaged in the guessing game, as

we may see from comments by him in the Journal to Stella. On November 25, 1710, he insists, "the bishop is out entirely on his conjectures of my share in the Tatlers."¹⁷ On October 31: "The Tatler upon Milton's Spear [No. 237] is not mine, madam. What a puzzle there was between you and your judgement?"¹⁸ And on December 23: "You are mistaken in your guesses about Tatlers: I did neither write that on Noses [No. 260] nor Religion [No. 257], nor do I send him of late any hints at all."¹⁹ There is no need to assume that this curiosity and conjecture as to authorship were peculiar to Esther Johnson. Apparently Swift was widely thought to be responsible for more Tatlers than he actually was; indeed, "those not in the secret attributed the authorship to Swift, to Steele, even to Yalden."²⁰

The initials at the end of each Spectator also seem to have aroused a great deal of curiosity, and in No. 221, Addison remarks about this, teasing the readers with mock-explanations. The initials might be "little amulets or charms to preserve the paper against the fascination and malice of evil eyes;" but they are not.

I shall, however, so far explain myself to the reader, as to let him know that the letters C, L, and X, are cabalistical, and carry more in them than it is proper for the world to be acquainted with. Those who are versed in the philosophy of Pythagoras, and swear by the Tetractys, that is the number four, will know very well that the number ten, which is signified by the letter X, (and which has so much perplexed the town) has in it many particular powers; that it is called by Platonic writers the complete number; that one, two, three, and four put together make up the number ten; and that ten is all. But these are not mysteries for the ordinary readers to be let into. A man must have spent many years in hard study before he can arrive at the knowledge of them.

His conclusion is that ". . . as for the full explanation of these matters I must refer them to time, which discovers all things." The same curiosity was probably aroused over the initials and hand-symbol accompanying each Guardian. Even when a paper was concluded with the real author's initials, as in Town-Talk No. 5, it was questioned:

He told me that Sir R. Steele had no hand in writing the Town-Talk, which was attributed to him; that it was one Dr. Mandeville and an Apothecary of his

Acquaintance that wrote the paper; and that some
 Passages were wrote on purpose to make believe it was
 Sir R. Steele.²¹

Mystery and curiosity sold papers.

The use of the fictitious editor allowed, at times, a sort of ironic wit, at the expense of the authors themselves (and especially Steele), probably appreciated only by the contributors and a small circle of friends. The author might have his persona speak of him in this manner:

This Steele is certainly a very good sort of man, and it is a thousand pities he does not understand politics; but, if he is turned out, my Lady Lizard will invite him down to our country house. I shall be very glad of his company, and I'll certainly leave something to one of his children. (Guardian 53)

He could make puns on his real and assumed identities:

Adieu, old fellow, and let me give thee this advice at parting; E'en get thyself case-hardened; for though the very best steel may snap, yet old iron, you know, will rust. [The Guardian was often addressed as Old Iron]. (Guardian 95)

In No. 218, Mr. Spectator reports overhearing a description of himself which, he insists, does not fit; and he is justified in objecting, for it is in fact an obvious allusion to Steele.

He is, it seems, said the good man, the most extravagant creature in the world; has run through vast sums, and yet been in continual want: a man, for all he talks so well of economy, unfit for any of the offices of life by reason of his profuseness. It would be an unhappy thing to be his wife, his child, or his friend; and yet he talks as well of those duties of life as any one.

Nestor Ironside (Addison) remarks, in Guardian 98:

. . . it is observed of every branch of our family [Bickerstaffs, Spectators, and Ironsides], that we have all of us a wonderful inclination to give good advice, though it is remarked of some of us, that we are apt on this occasion, rather to give than take.

Steele makes jokes on his own writing in Tatler 17, and Spectators 310 and 338.

The author [Steele] of the prologue, I suppose, pleads an old excuse I have read somewhere, of 'being dull with design', [an allusion to a statement in Tatler 38:

'It is to be noticed, that when any part of this paper appears dull, there is a design to it']. (Spectator 338)

But quite obviously all of this does not explain the pains taken to create an Isaac Bickerstaff. There were other important advantages to be gained from establishing an elaborate fictitious editor, and some of these shall now be considered.

II. From the moment that he first began considering the publication of a periodical, Steele would naturally be concerned with the important problems of quickly catching and holding the attention of as large an audience as possible. It was necessary, of course, if his work was to have the wide-spread effect he hoped for, that it should have as large a circulation as possible. It would be ridiculous, however, to assume that his intentions were entirely philanthropic, for Steele, who was always in financial difficulties, undoubtedly regarded his papers seriously as money-making enterprises. Bickerstaff says in the fourth Tatler:

We. . . have therefore all along informed the public that we intend to give our advices for our own sakes, and are labouring to make our lucubrations come to some price in money, for our more convenient support in the service of the public.

Audience appeal was therefore very important, and the competition among pamphleteers in this age of pamphleteering was intense. Writers often relied on eye-catching or borrowed titles, flaunting title pages, or lurid prefaces, but Steele found that the use of a name already made popular would serve equally well, and that the creation of an interesting character as an "editor" could intrigue his audience and provide a certain amount of continuity which seemed necessary to encourage faithful readers.

He admits that one of the main reasons for the Tatler's rapid popularity was the adoption of the name of Isaac Bickerstaff and the exploitation of the fame which Swift had given it.

. . . A work of this nature [says Bickerstaff in the dedication to Maynwaring] requiring time to grow into the notice of the world, it happened very luckily, that a little before I resolved upon this design, a gentleman had written predictions, and two or three other pieces in my name, which rendered it famous through all parts of Europe; and, by an inimitable spirit and humour,

raised it to as high a pitch of reputation as it could possibly arrive at.²²

Swift's Bickerstaff writings, as Steele later acknowledged in his own name, "created an inclination in the town towards anything that could appear in the same disguise."²³

It has already been noted that, where the inflammatory nature of the writings probably ensured some readers (in the political periodicals), and where the number of editions would be expected to be small because of the dependence on temporary issues, the editor was usually undeveloped. The "depth" of the fictitious editor seems to have varied inversely with the quantity of political controversy, probably because in those literary papers which were intended to be long-lived, he was the indispensable initial attraction. He was deliberately "whimsical" and "humorous" obviously to appeal to those readers (and they proved to be many) who were looking for something other than constantly serious political and moral tracts.

I. . . spoke in the character of an old man, a philosopher, an humourist, an astrologer, and a Censor [says Steele in the last Tatler], to allure my reader with the variety of my subjects and insinuate, if I could, the weight of reason with the agreeableness of wit.

The appeal of the fictitious editor is also enhanced by what might be called his "environment" of friends, relatives, and correspondents, all of whom probably helped to attract readers. Jenny Distaff and the feminine Lizards, for example, are a direct appeal to women. Jenny presents the woman's point of view, sometimes an outright anti-masculine one, and she is at times either the supposed author of, or the subject of, Steele's dissertations on marriage.²⁴ The membership of the Spectator Club is, for greater appeal, "very luckily composed of such persons as are engaged in different ways of life, and deputed as it were out of the most conspicuous classes of mankind" (Spectator 34). There is no rank or degree "who have not their representative in this club." The Englishman does not have a club, but he has with him as friend, guide, and commentator, the venerable Nestor Ironside, who, by appearing in the opening number where there is "a summary Account of the Transfusion of the Spirit of Ironside into me an unknown Writer," is an obvious device to hold those readers who have

enjoyed the Guardian.

The characters encountered by, and associated with, the fictitious editor are most useful, however, as furnishers of "the greatest variety of hints and materials" for his papers; as stimulants for his lucubrations.

When I want materials for this paper, it is my custom to go abroad in quest of game; and when I meet any proper subject, I take the first opportunity of setting down an hint of it upon Paper. (Spectator 46)

"Editors", associates, and correspondents, all add to the appeal of the papers. As Robert J. Allen explains, "much of the vividness and immediacy of the papers resulted from what may be called their dramatic quality. They are full of characters."²⁵ They serve both to lead readers into topics and to lighten heavy discourses. Englishman 38, for example, begins in this chatty manner:

Mr. Ironside having done me the Honour of a Visit, I happened to receive at that Time all Papers put into the Lion. He opened as fast as I did; but it raised my Curiosity very much when I saw him intent upon a Paper with but four Words in it. While he continued in that musing Posture, he threw to me the Letter, containing only First Corinthians, Chap. 13. I never liked the old Gentleman better than in that Aspect which the Warmth of his Thoughts then gave him.

The flighty reader having been trapped, a somber expostulation on charity follows. Bickerstaff's "familiar spirit", Pacelot, has been delivering some grave remarks on duelling, in Tatler 26, when,

. . . he recovered from it, and told me, 'it was too soon to give my discourse on this subject so serious a turn; you have chiefly to do with that part of mankind which must be led into reflection by degrees, and you must treat this custom with humour and raillery to get an audience, before you come to pronounce sentence upon it.'

Discussions are often opened with a description of the encounters which prompted them:

Passing under Ludgate the other day, I heard a voice bawling for charity, which I thought I had somewhere heard before. Coming near to the grate, the prisoner called me by my name, and desired I would throw something into the box; I was out of countenance for him, and did as he bid me, by putting in half a crown. I went away, reflecting upon the strange constitutions

of some men, and how meanly they behave themselves in all sorts of conditions. (Spectator 82)

Letters are introduced with an account of their reception by the "editor."

Mrs. Ann Page was smiling very graciously upon me, in a Dream between seven and eight yesterday Morning, when three thundering Knocks at my Door drove the fair Image from my Fancy, as Diana was hurried to the Moon by the Cymbals and Trumpets of Heraclea. My Servant came up to me, while I was cursing the rude Hand that had disturbed me; and delivered me a Letter, which was given him, as he said, by a lusty fresh-coloured young Man in an Embroidered Coat, who promised to call upon me, two Days hence, at the same Hour. The dread of such another Noise made me break open the Letter with some Precipitation. (Lover 17)

Often heavy moralizing is made more palatable presented as an allegorical dream recalled by the "editor" or a correspondent.²⁶ Serious topics were obviously made more pertinent and interesting when delivered as comments on the actions of "real" people. Bickerstaff discussed the actions of Jenny, Mr. Spectator observes the members of the Club, and Nestor Ironside surveys the Lizard family. A paper on pedantry begins with an account of Jack Lizard's return from the university (No. 24); one on "various schemes of happiness" (No. 31) with a description of Lady Lizard surrounded by her daughters, as they discuss the problem. A very common device is to present a moral treatise through example, by illustrating the paper with a "character" of some afflicted person or persons, usually paired with that of an admirable one.

With himself, his relatives, his friends, minor characters, and all of his correspondents to draw from for inspiration, the fictitious editor can introduce some much-needed life, especially into the opening sentences of his papers. An explanation of the value of this is given by Mr. Spectator himself:

. . . a man improves more by reading the story of a person eminent for prudence and virtue, than by the finest rules and precepts of morality. In the same manner a representation of those calamities and misfortunes which a weak man suffers from wrong measures, and ill concerted schemes of life, is apt to make a deeper impression upon our minds than the wisest maxims and instructions that can be given. . . .(No. 299)

Any random sampling will reveal the way the first-person narratives, the dramatic openings, and the descriptions of scenes or actions, lend a feeling of immediacy and heighten the illusion of reality in the papers, with the effect that they are more interesting and probably more persuasive.

The fictitious editors and the characters are thus used extensively to attract readers both to the opening numbers and then to many of the successive papers; to add weight to the arguments by example, and often to lighten the tone with humor and human interest, so that ". . . men may take up this paper, and be caught by an admonition under the disguise of a diversion" (Guardian 21). Only in those papers where diversion is not wanted; where heavy-handed persuasion is the object, do they cease to be important.

The fact that they were entertaining as well as instructive was, of course, one of the most popular qualities of Addison and Steele's periodicals. Sources of amusement in the papers were many: ludicrous subjects, strange characters, humorous letters (both actual and contrived); and the fictitious editor himself. He was responsible for providing at least some of the humor in most of the papers in which he occurred, though often to a very limited extent when the tone of the periodical was serious, as would be expected. Isaac Bickerstaff and Marmaduke Myrtle are the most entertaining of all, because their periodicals are the least concerned with politics and heavy moralizing, and because they, more than any of the others, are laughable in themselves. They are still spectators and censors, but very often the joke is on them.

The type of humor associated with the "editor" also varied because it was often dependent on his particular whimsical characteristics. There is a certain Bickerstaffian humor which is peculiar to the Tatler, arising from Isaac's history (his previous use by Swift) and from his character as an Astrologer, Physician, and proud family man. Steele's use of the Bickerstaff name allowed numerous allusions to Partridge and the Partridge jokes which were greatly exploited in the Tatler for purposes of humor and an appeal to recent topical interest. Readers are warned to mend their ways lest they be pronounced dead like Partridge and required to bury themselves. A common comment is, ". . . his parts decay, and he is not much more alive than Partridge" (No. 44). Tatler 99 contains the following

notice:

"Whereas a commission of interment has been awarded against doctor John Partridge, philomath, professor of physic and astrology; and whereas the said Partridge hath not surrendered himself, nor shown cause to the contrary; these are to certify, that the company of Upholders will proceed to bury him from Cordwainer's-hall, on Tuesday the twenty-ninth instant, where any six of his surviving friends who still believe him to be alive, are desired to come prepared to hold up the pall.

"Note; we shall light away at six in the evening, there being to be a sermon."

Number 118 includes a letter from Partridge addressed "From the banks of the Styx," in which he admits he was once angry with Bickerstaff, ". . . but you have dispatched such multitudes after me to keep me in countenance, that I am very well reconciled both to you and my condition," and No. 216 gives a final confirmation of the reports of Partridge's death. The correspondence and the mock-notices are full of references to the joke, which was maintained successfully for over two hundred numbers. Here is another example:

Whereas Mr. Bickerstaff has received intelligence that a young gentleman, who has taken my discourses upon John Partridge and others in too literal a sense, and is suing an elder brother to an ejectment; the aforesaid young gentleman is hereby advised to drop his action, no man being esteemed dead in law, who eats and drinks, and receives his rents. (No. 76)

Bickerstaff even applies his powers of divination to himself, in an humorous request for letters:

. . . I find by a calculation of my own nativity, that I cannot hold out with any tolerable wit longer than two minutes after twelve of the clock at night between the eighteenth and nineteenth of the next month: for which space of time you may still expect to hear from me, but no longer . . . (No. 7)

This woeful prediction can only be thwarted by the readers, who must send him material for future papers. We know that at least one reader was intrigued by this foolery, because Pope comments in a letter: "I am, it must be owned, Dead in a Natural capacity, according to Mr. Bickerstaff. . . ." ²⁷

Bickerstaff's character as enthusiast, projector, and admirer of the

Royal Society, gives ample opportunity for arousing laughter at his expense, as a sort of Scriblerian figure:

In the several capacities I bear, of astrologer, civilian, and physician, I have with great application studied the public emolument: to this end serve all my lucubrations, speculations, and whatever other labours I undertake, whether nocturnal or diurnal. On this motive am I induced to publish a never-failing remedy for the spleen: my experience in this distemper came from a very remarkable cure on my ever worthy friend Tom Spindle, who, through excessive gaiety, had exhausted that natural stock of wit and spirits he had long been blessed with; he was sunk and flattened to the lowest degree imaginable, sitting whole hours over the 'Book of Martyrs' and 'Pilgrim's Progress;' his other contemplations never rising higher than the colour of his urine, or the regularity of his pulse. In this condition I found him, accompanied by the learned Dr. Drachm, and a good old nurse. Drachm had prescribed magazines of herbs, and mines of steel. I soon discovered the malady, and descanted on the nature of it, until I convinced both the patient and his nurse, that the spleen is not to be cured by medicine, but by poetry. (No. 47)

Accounts like this, of wondrous cures "which I publish for the benefit of the world, and not out of any thoughts of private advantage," make us amused both at patient and physician. One Mrs. Spy, as another example, was cured of "a great imperfection in her eyes, which made her eternally rolling them from one coxcomb to another in public places, in so languishing a manner, that it at once lessened her own power, and her beholders vanity." The remedy was "twenty drops of my ink placed in certain letters on which she attentively looked for half an hour" which "have restored her to the true use of her sight, which is to guide, and not mislead us."

Ever since she took the liquor, which I call Bickerstaff's circumspection-water, she looks right forward, and can bear being looked at for half a day without returning one glance. (No. 34)

Like the "author" of A Tale of a Tub, Bickerstaff describes marvelous inventions, including a Political Barometer that "by the rising and falling of a certain magical liquor, presages all changes and revolutions in government" (No. 214); an ecclesiastical Thermometer, "giving as manifest prognostications of the changes in revolutions of the Church, as the

[Political Barometer] does of those in State" (No. 220); and "a certain astrological pair of scales" which will measure the differences in weight of injuries and reparations (No. 250).

I might acquaint my reader, that these scales were made under the influence of the sun when he was in Libra, and describe many signatures on the weights both of injury and reparation but as this would look rather to proceed from an ostentation of my own art, than any care for the public, I shall pass it over in silence.

Like a true Swiftian "modern," he makes promises of discussions to come; gives an account of a character to be pursued; and then breaks off until he has more information or has meditated more fully upon it. He never continues.

But I shall defer considering this subject at large, until I come to my treatise of oscilation, laughter, and ridicule. (No. 63)

His projected treatises are of the same humorous variety as those of the "author" of A Tale of a Tub:

Mr. Bickerstaff has now in the press, 'A defence of awkward fellows against the class of smarts; with a dissertation upon the gravity which becomes weighty persons. Illustrated by way of fable, and a discourse on the nature of the elephant, the cow, the dray-horse, and the dromedary, which have motions equally steady and grave. To this is added a treatise written by an elephant, according to Pliny, against receiving foreigners into the forest. Adapted to some present circumstances. Together with allusions to such beasts as declare against the poor Palatines.' (No. 60)

Bickerstaff is the only one of the fictitious editors who exhibits the overweening pride which is so often a source of comedy in the author-butts of the century. He is immensely proud of his powers, his position (as censor of society), his condition (esquire), and his family. The invention of his genealogical table encouraged contributors to exercise their wits grafting comic limbs on the Staffian family tree. Swift's "Description of a City Shower," for example, is ascribed to Sir Humphrey Wagstaff. Isaac receives whimsical correspondence from (to mention only a few) Mr. Quarterstaff (No. 8), Timothy Pikestaff (No. 9), Mr. Colstaff (No. 10), Mr. Whipstaff (No. 14), Ephraim Bedstaff (No. 21), Bread the Staff of Life (No. 25), Benjamin Beadlestaff (No. 45); and more distant

relatives like Nathaniel Broomstick (No. 10) and Dorothy Drumstick (No. 140). As a climax to all of this, he gives a proud, pre-Shandean account of the physiological improvements in his family, conducted down the centuries through discreet breeding, which deserves quotation in full:

We have, in the genealogy of our house, the descriptions and pictures of our ancestors from the time of king Arthur; in whose days there was one of my own name, a knight of his round table, and known by the name of Sir Isaac Bickerstaff. He was low of stature, and of a very swarthy complexion, not unlike a Portuguese Jew. But he was more prudent than men of that height usually are, and would often communicate to his friends his design of lengthening and whitening his posterity. His eldest son Ralph, for that was his name, was for this reason married to a lady who had little else to recommend her, but that she was very tall and very fair. The issue of this match, with the help of high shoes, made a tolerable figure in the next age; though the complexion of the family was obscure until the fourth generation from this marriage. From which time, until the reign of William the Conqueror, the females of our house was famous for their needlework and fine skins. In the male line, there happened an unlucky accident in the reign of Richard III: the eldest son of Philip, then chief of the family, being born with a hump-back and very high nose. This was the more astonishing, because none of his forefathers ever had such a blemish; nor indeed was there any in the neighborhood of that make, except the butler, who was noted for round shoulders, and a Roman nose; what made the nose the less excusable, was the remarkable smallness of his eyes.

These several defects were mended by succeeding matches; the eyes were open in the next generation, and the hump fell in a century and a half; but the greater difficulty was how to reduce the nose: which I do not find was accomplished until about the middle of the reign of Henry VII. or rather the beginning of that of Henry VIII.

But while our ancestors were thus taken up in cultivating the eyes and nose, the face of the Bickerstaffs fell down insensibly into a chin; which was not taken notice of, their thoughts being so much employed upon the more noble features, until it became almost too long to be remedied.

But length of time, and successive care in our alliances, have cured this also, and reduced our faces into that tolerable oval, which we enjoy at present. I would not be tedious in this discourse,

but observe, that our race suffered very much about three hundred years ago, by the marriage of one of our heiresses with an eminent courtier, who gave us spindleshanks and cramps in our bones; insomuch that we did not recover our health and legs until Sir Walter Bickerstaff married Maud the milk-maid, of whom the then Garter King at Arms, a facetious person, said pleasantly enough, "that she had spoiled our blood, but mended our constitutions." (No. 75)

The Lover relies almost solely on the character of Marmaduke Myrtle, and especially his correspondents, for its entertainment value. The club which is established in the opening number (after the manner of the Spectator) is virtually ignored, and the Lover is, in a sense, a reversion to the Tatler form with its use of a rather ridiculous fictitious editor as the major source of humor. Of course the frustrated lover was a very common figure of fun, not only in the other periodicals but in the whole of English literature, so the figure of Marmaduke was almost certain to arouse laughter. We are entertained with a rather conventional figure in the whimsical "editor" who avidly reads "the true Histories of famous Knights and beautiful Damsels, which the ignorant call Romances," plays the Base-Viol to divert himself, muses on Mrs. Ann Page, and vows in the true chivalric manner to save fair maids from vile seducers by means, not of the sword, but the pen (No. 2). His relationship with Mrs. Ann Page and his love-melancholy in general are constantly labored as comic devices in his own papers, or as a point of affinity with his correspondents, most of whom are humorously suffering under the same affliction. Almost everything that the Lover provides in the way of discussions of love and marriage has been introduced somewhere in a previous periodical; only the entertaining personality of Myrtle makes a second use of it supportable.

In no other periodicals besides the Tatler and Lover were the editors so much relied upon as sources of amusement. In the political papers, of course, they counted for very little in this regard, but even in the Spectator, Guardian, and Theatre, they became more and more observer-commentators as attention was distributed more widely by the presence of the Spectator Club, the Lizard Family, and a growing number of correspondents. Mr. Spectator is, however, intended to assume some of the burden of entertainment, for as we have seen he is established in the opening numbers as a

humorous eccentric, and this is carried throughout, so that a very gentle kind of laughter is aroused at his expense. There are amusing accounts of his taciturnity and the effects thereof, in the first series;²⁸ and because this would obviously have been over-worked after five hundred and fifty-five numbers, the second series begins with an account of his finally breaking silence (there were hints of this before the first series ended):

Upon the first opening my mouth I made a speech, consisting of about half a dozen well-turned periods; but grew so very hoarse upon it, that for three days together, instead of finding the use of my tongue, I was afraid that I had quite lost it. Besides, the unusual extension of my muscles on this occasion made my face ache on both sides to such a degree, that nothing but an invincible resolution and perseverance could have prevented me from falling back to my monosyllables. (No. 556)

Humorous references are made by himself and correspondents to his whimsical habits, and to his other trade-mark characteristic as well: his short face (Nos. 17, 536). He is addressed disrespectfully as "Dear Dumb" by his correspondents, and he is invited to join, among others, the Ugly Club. (No. 32). His innocence, tranquility, and modesty, examples of which are diffused throughout the Spectator, excite a sort of affectionate amusement which is very much different from that found in the Tatler, and which is perhaps one of the major features of the paper.

Nestor Ironside is a less striking individual than Mr. Spectator, and he lacks the interesting background of Bickerstaff. He is not entirely unamusing; his old age and his role as a rather prudish guardian of the public morals allow some humor. He is addressed as "Old Nestor", "Old iron", and even "Old Dad" (No. 132). He reports that his criticisms are not always well received:

A lady, who subscribes herself Teraminta, bids me in a very pert manner mind my own affairs, and not pretend to meddle with their linen; for that they do not dress for an old fellow, who cannot see them without a pair of spectacles. Another, who calls herself Bubnelia, vents her passion in scurrilous terms; an old ninny-hammer, a dotard, a nincompoop, is the best language she can afford me. Florella indeed expostulates with me upon this subject, and only complains that she

is forced to return a pair of stays which were made in the extremity of the fashion, that she might not be thought to encourage peeping. (No. 109)

An enraged swordsman writes him "Old Testy", and warns him against attacking the long sword fraternity:

Your grey hairs for once shall be your protection, and this billet a fair warning to you for your audacious raillery upon the dignity of long swords. Look to it for the future; consider we Brothers of the Blade are men of long reach He that shall rashly attempt to regulate our hilts, or reduce our blades, had need to have a heart of oak, as well as 'Sides of Iron.' Thus much for the present. In the meantime Bilbo is the word, remember that, and tremble. (No. 145)

But on the whole, Nestor is a grave gentleman, and as a result his paper is less entertaining than any of the others mentioned. Johnson says of him:

The character of Guardian was too narrow and too serious: it might properly enough admit both the duties and decencies of life, but seemed not to include literary speculations, and was in some degree violated by merriment and burlesque. What had the Guardian of the Lizards to do with clubs of tall or of little men, with nests of ants, or with Strada's prolusions?²⁹

The Guardian, in fact, approaches as closely as any of Steele and Addison's major non-political periodicals do, to being a mere collection of essays. The Theatre and the Englishman, more polemic and even less entertaining, show a further retrogression in this regard. The "editor" is present, but lifeless, and the paper is, at least for later readers, uninteresting, which would seem to indicate the need for an humorous individual who can establish an occasionally bantering association with his readers as a relief from the important instructive one; who will not be "violated by merriment and burlesque."

There was a definite attempt made to use the fictitious editors as a link between the different periodicals. Mr. Bickerstaff and Nestor Ironside make allusions to the earlier productions, and in fact, trace their lineage from Bickerstaff.

The first who undertook to instruct the world in single papers was Isaac Bickerstaff of famous memory: a man nearly related to the family of the Ironsides. We have

often smoked a pipe together; for I was so much in his books, that at his decease he left me a silver standish, a pair of spectacles, and a lamp by which he used to write his lucubrations.

The venerable Isaac was succeeded by a gentleman of the same family, very memorable for the shortness of his face and his speeches. This ingenious author published his thoughts, and held his tongue with great applause, for two years together.

I, Nestor Ironside, have now for some time undertaken to fill the place of these my two renowned kinsmen and predecessors. (Guardian 98)

Ironside was also used, as we have seen, in the Englishman, as a link with the Guardian. In Lover 23, there is this humorous reference to Bickerstaff by a misguided lover-correspondent:

The last I advised with was the most renowned Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq; He was a Person of great Note and Fashion: Had very good Practice in this City for some Years: He had acquired a large Stock of Fame and Reputation for his Experience in the World, his Acquaintance with all the little Weaknesses and Infirmities incident to Human Kind, and was more particularly had in esteem for his Knowledge and Proficiency in the Occult Sciences. From a Gentleman thus qualified, what might I not have hoped for? But, Sir, I soon understood that all his Predictions and Prophecies were but Dreams and Fables to amuse and divert us, and that he understood himself very well, when he called himself Tatler.

Indeed the Lover was advertised as written in imitation of the Tatler, and the creation of Myrtle's club, which was never pursued, would seem to have been little more than a come-on for readers of the Spectator. All of this was, of course, good business, designed (along with allusions to, and use of material from previous periodicals) to titillate those readers who had read the predecessors, and to encourage those who had not, to do so.

It must be remembered that the readers collected and bound copies, especially of the Spectator; that back numbers were sold, and that collected volumes were a very lucrative business for the authors and publishers.³⁰ As an example of their popularity, Smithers remarks in his biography of Addison:

In addition to the daily publications, the first two collected volumes [of the Spectator] were ready for subscribers on 8 January 1712 The volumes

were well advertised and soon sold out.³¹

Collected editions of the Tatler and Guardian were available as well, and so it was economically as well as aesthetically wise to recall them to the readers.

But a far more important function of the "editors" and associates was to impose some sort of unity on their own works. By appearing at various intervals they tended to knit the broken pieces, in much the same way that Addison's regularly spaced critical discussions did. The "editor" himself is immediately established as a sort of recurring figurehead; a single personality from whom flow most of the papers; a well-defined individual with certain characteristic features which soon become indelibly associated with him and create a distinct image of him in the public mind. He is often, in fact, a trade-mark for the whole paper. His personality and his dominant humour set the tone of the whole work. In some of the papers, like the Englishman and Lover, he is even somewhat illustrative of the things said; he is central to the theme of the work. In all cases where he is at all well-developed, he is an individual to whom the readers respond and with whom they correspond (whether always aware of his fictitious nature or not, is not certain) in a less impersonal manner than, say, an Athenian Society. He is often a sort of Athenian Society unto himself, under whose name are lumped the contributions of numerous talents. Bickerstaff, for example, can be a knowledgeable man of the world and a great champion of the ladies through the contributions of Steele; he can be a learned man and critic, especially familiar with the classics, through the contributions of Addison; and he can be generally a wise and witty commentator on human fashions and foibles, through the contributions of all those concerned in the project.

The fictitious editor, and his associates, then, are perhaps the major elements for lending some sort of cohesion to an otherwise disjointed series of papers from a number of different authors. The "editor" is the catalyst which sets the whole thing in motion; the first-person pronoun which sets the spark to by far the greater proportion of the papers (even introducing the letters); and he is the entertaining dramatic link between them all. Accounts of his physical characteristics, age, habits, place

of lodgings, lend a note of authenticity; and his constant presence gives a sense of immediacy which probably does as much as possible to overcome the dryness and impersonality which is so common to collections of essays. Those papers in which the "editor" was only a pseudonym, as a result of the very fact that he was simply a pseudonym, and not only because of the limitations of their subject matter, are less unified, less interesting, less entertaining, less aesthetically rewarding in general. James Ferguson, in a statement referring specifically to the *Spectator*, but which may be applied to the other "editors" as well, gives an admirable summary account of this value:

The character of the *Spectator* is never lost sight of; it is insinuated through the entire production, and renders it, in fact, a complete picture of the mind of an individual. By this means a very considerable portion of our interest and curiosity is excited; we entertain an affection for the writer who has thus given us such a masterly portrait of himself, and we perceive with delight that through the medium of this minute delineation of his person and manners, and those of his associates, he has formed a common centre of attraction, round which the whole work turns with a correspondence and beauty of design which have for ever established it as the best model of the periodical essay.³²

III. There is some danger, after the last section, of leaving the impression that the only purpose of the fictitious editor was to provide diversion. However, it must be remembered that the periodicals of Steele and Addison were, above all, morally and politically persuasive journals, designed to reform the manners and thinking of the time. Even the simplest masks were an effective device, if not a very subtle one, for advancing the religious, political, and social views of the authors. The undeveloped "editors" were avowedly partisans. Even the names of their periodicals suggest the sentiments to be found therein, all of them strongly Whig, and many of them expressed in the grand old tradition of rabble-rousing propaganda. The *Freeholder* defines "the political faith of a Tory" as a "strange alacrity in believing absurdity and inconsistency" (No. 14), and insists that the most beautiful, intelligent, and virtuous women in town are Whigs. The *Englishman* asserts that ". . . the Merchant is the Child of Britain who enriches his whole family" (No. 4). He defends Anglicanism (No. 21),

attacks the Examiner,³³ extols the limited British monarchy,³⁴ protests the postponement of the demolition of Dunkirk,³⁵ and generally, with almost every word, attempts to whip up nationalistic, anti-Jacobite, anti-French, anti-Catholic fervor. Most of this very blatant propaganda, of course, did not require use of a character-mask; the arguments were straight-forward, the purpose was forceful persuasion, and the actual authors were disguised, temporarily at least; this was all that was required.

Why, then, should so much time have been spent in creating an elaborate mask for the earlier, major periodicals? The main answer for this lies in the fact that those papers were written for an essentially different purpose, and that the "editors" had a more intricate function; but interestingly enough, most of the Whig sentiments mentioned above were also suggested, more subtly, in the "literary" papers whose well-developed fictitious editors professed objectivity or disinterest in politics. Mr. Spectator, though he professes "to observe an exact Neutrality between the Whigs and Tories" (No. 1), lauds the "middle condition in life," defends the merchant vehemently (Nos. 218, 248, 283), has a vision of "Publick Credit" (No. 3), grows ecstatic in the Royal Exchange (No. 69), talks condescendingly of the French (Nos. 45, 277), and praises Marlborough (as all of Steele's periodicals do). It is even suggested that the accounts of his friend, Sir Roger de Coverly, are part of a subtle scheme for undermining Toryism:

The strength of the Tory party is the smaller country gentry with their Jacobite leanings and their opposition to the moneyed interest. . . . Addison might have anticipated Squire Western (as he did later in the Freeholder) and painted merely the block-headed, fox-hunting sot, the tyrant of his family and his village. Instead, with the help of Steele, he invents Sir Roger de Coverley The enemy, far from being vilified, is being turned into a dear old man. The thought that he could ever be dangerous has been erased from our minds; but so also the thought that anything he said could be taken seriously. We all love Sir Roger; but of course we do not really attend to him as we do -- well, to Sir Andrew Freeport.³⁶

The "neutral" Mr. Spectator never condemns Sir Roger, but simply looks on him with a sort of affectionate disrespect. One of his correspondents even suggests that "Sir Roger's dying was the wisest thing he ever did in his life. . . ." (Spectator 553).

Nestor Ironside, who "shall be impartial though [he] cannot be neuter," is "with relation to the government of the church, a Tory: with regard to the state, a Whig" (No. 1). He includes censorious remarks on the Examiner (Nos. 63, 80, 90), an article on the demolition of Dunkirk (No. 28), and mild anti-French comments such as, "there is nothing to be met with in the country, but mirth and poverty. Everyone sings, laughs, and starves" (No. 101). He even publishes, as we have seen, open letters by that notorious Whig, Richard Steele. The "writer" of Town-Talk, in No. 5, remarks, "your last admonishes me, that . . . I should send you sometimes some Politick News, but I am very averse to these subjects. However . . .;" and there follows a letter, initialed "R.S." addressed to the Pretender, scolding him for his Papist leanings and publishing for later rebuttal, his "Declaration." Even the Lover, Marmaduke Myrtle, who is so far removed from the every-day affairs of the world, replies to an attack by the Tory Monitor, and, like Mr. Spectator, extols the wonders of British manufacture:

I little thought that I should ever in the Lover have occasion to talk of such things as Trade; but when a Man. . . reflects what incredible Improvement our Artificers of England have made in Manufacture of Glass in thirty Years time, and can suppose such an Alteration of our Affairs in other parts of Commerce, it is demonstrable that the Nations who are possessed of Mines of Gold, are but Drudges to a People, whose Arts and Industry, with other Advantages natural to us, may make it self the Shop of the World. (No. 34)

People who would perhaps not have read a brazenly Whig paper openly edited by Steele may thus have been propagandized through the use of a deceptively neutral fictitious editor.

Of course, an attempt to refine the taste of the town in literature and drama was also an important feature. Steele and Addison's "editors" imposed the tastes of their creators by carrying on an incessant campaign against bad writing, and especially licentiousness on the stage.³⁷ They also made serious attempts to revive interest in Milton, with the series on Paradise Lost by Addison in the Spectator and with frequent reference to his works. There were, as well, a critique on Chevy-Chase,³⁸ and a series of articles on the pastoral, the latter given in the Guardian. Their use of Greek and Latin mottos along with constant quotation from, and reference

to classical texts, was also undoubtedly designed to arouse a public interest in the ancients, of whom Addison was so fond. Besides these somewhat organized campaigns there were scattered suggestions of good books to read, especially for ladies, and individual papers discussing literary taste, such as Spectator 220, on "false wit and mechanic poetry," and Guardian 15, in which Nestor lightly condemns "easy" verse.

But literary criticism was of a rather secondary importance, and political propaganda did not become really prominent until after the Guardian. Before this, moral persuasion was the primary aim, and this posed some grave problems for the authors which the use of the fictitious editor helped to overcome.

The scope of the criticism of manners and morals in these papers was, of course, fantastically wide, embracing such favorite subjects as love in all its aspects, coquettes, rakes, marriage, the folly of forced marriages, formulae for success in marriage, the corruption of manners and language, true and false wit, duelling, gaming, sharpers, prudence, modesty, temperance--and countless other such topics with many variations upon them. Probably no man could be in a position to offer, under his own name, censorious comments on such a vast range of subjects, without some fear of his criticisms rebounding upon himself.

Addison was actually as well qualified as anyone could be for a critic of this type, because he was, as far as we know, remarkably free from vices; but there were some things which might have aroused comment had his name been signed to the papers. One of the favourite topics, on which he wrote not a few papers, was love and marriage, but he was a bachelor, not married until 1715, and "there is in fact every evidence that, intimate as he was with men and acute as he was in perception of their character, his knowledge and ideas about women were drawn from reading and from polite conversation, rather than from their intimate friendship."³⁹ He wrote papers on temperance (Spectator 569) though he was known as a heavy drinker himself. He talked of the dangers of ambition and the pursuit of fame (Spectator 255, 256, 257) though he was avowedly ambitious, and a systematic pursuer of fame, both literary and political. He talked of the indifference to praise or censure (Spectator 255) though he was hyper-sensitive to criticism himself.

Though in the case of Addison we may be forced to scratch for minor failings, this is not so with Steele, to whom Johnson was rather kind when he remarked, "Steele, I believe, practised the lighter vices."⁴⁰ Steele was, in fact, exposing himself to the danger of strong rebuttal for many of his moral tracts. He conducted an incessant campaign against duelling, and yet he had badly wounded a man himself.⁴¹ Although he often gave advice on the conduct of a successful marriage, his own, in spite of his charming letters and constant devotion to his wife, was wracked with petty quarrels. He wrote a series of Spectators on hen-pecked husbands and the taming of shrews (Nos. 176, 212, 216), but Swift said of him, "he is governed by his wife most abominably. . . ."⁴² His many papers on illicit relationships between the sexes would obviously have been negated, were it known that the author supported an illegitimate daughter.⁴³ And his own notorious lack of prudence in financial affairs, the unchecked spending which resulted in his constantly being sued for non-payment of debts, belied his homilies on prudence and the miseries of debt and bankruptcy. This, in fact, was a failing on which enemies, and friends, and Steele himself often remarked satirically. Sir John Edgar, in Theatre 14, for example, after reporting a conversation in which Sir Richard had been defending his economic pamphlet "A Nation a Family" and extoling his public spirit, concludes:

I left him, very much out of Humor with him, and in ridicule of his paying the Public Debts, before he had recover'd his Estate to pay his own. . . .

In works of this scope there will always be cases where the author is unqualified to speak or where, as is so often the case with Steele, there are inconsistencies between what is preached and what is practised. Steele was fully aware of the precariousness of his position and of the subsequent need to conceal his identity, for he says in the concluding Tatler:

. . . I considered, that severity of manners was absolutely necessary to him who would censure others, and for that reason, and that only, chose to talk in a mask. I shall not carry my humility so far as to call myself a vicious man, but at the same time must confess myself at best but pardonable. And, with no greater character than this, a man would make but an indifferent progress in attacking prevailing and fashionable vices, which Mr. Bickerstaff has done with a freedom

of spirit, that would have lost both its beauty and efficacy, had it been pretended to by Mr. Steele.

In Rambler 208, Johnson quotes Castiglione as saying, "A mask. . . confers a right of acting and speaking with less restraint, even when the wearer happens to be known." Steele and Addison apparently found this to be true especially since in their social and literary papers, they were assuming the role of censors of society, even a mock-assumption of which invites criticism at any time. They adopted a tone which was often consciously arrogant and self-indulgent, and this in a literary climate where modesty, impersonality, and tact were among the prime virtues of the polite author. "Anonymity made it possible," Peter Smithers suggests, "to deliver lofty moral discourses with an air of authority and condescension."⁴⁴ Thus Bickerstaff can explain, in the tone of a self-satisfied old man: "I believed it a very good office to the world, to sit down and show others the road, in which I am experienced by my wanderings and errors" (Tatler 170). Mr. Spectator, in a paper on envy (No. 19), is immensely condescending as he explains how he will divert his readers from envying his writings by occasionally revealing something about himself (such as the shortness of his face) which is not to be admired. Concerning fame and reputation, he says:

Much reflection has brought me to so easy a contempt for everything that is false, that (a false accusation) gave me no manner of uneasiness; but at the same time it threw me into deep thought upon the subject of fame in general; and I could not but pity such as were weak, as to value what the common people say. . . . (No. 218)

In an account of the progress of his paper, he reveals characteristic pride in the nobility of his aim, and the fact that he does not resort to petty slander, like so many of his colleagues (No. 262). Nestor Ironside, simply by taking the title of Guardian, naturally assumes a position of superiority and condescension. In addition, he quite immodestly declares himself "charitable, to an extravagance" (No. 166), and "wholly a stranger to" pride (No. 153). Sentiments such as this, of course, might have been highly resented coming from a known author, and Steele was fully aware of this, for he says in Spectator 555:

It is much more difficult to converse with the world

in a real than a personated character. That might pass for humour in the Spectator, which would look like arrogance in a writer who sets his name to his work. The fictitious person . . . might assume a mock authority, without being looked upon as vain and conceited.

And so, even if their characters had been spotless, Steele and Addison would have spoken in a mask, if only to protect themselves from the charge of gross arrogance and presumption.

But there was also the problem of making their moralizing acceptable to the readers. In Spectator 512, Addison comments on the difficulty of giving advice:

There is nothing which we receive with so much reluctance as advice. We look upon the man who gives it us as offering an affront to our understanding, and treating us like children or idiots. We consider the instruction as an implicit censure, and the zeal which any one shews for our good on such an occasion as a piece of presumption or impertinence. The truth of it is, the person who pretends to advise, does, in that particular, exercise a superiority over us, and can have no other reason for it, but that, in comparing us with himself, he thinks us defective in our conduct or our understanding. For these reasons, there is nothing so difficult as the art of making advice agreeable; and indeed all the writers, both ancient and modern, have distinguished themselves among one another, according to the perfection at which they have arrived in this art.

This problem of "making advice agreeable" is, in effect, the major one that he and Steele faced as soon as they set out to reform society, and the use of the fictitious editor certainly helped in its solution. It seems a simple psychological fact that readers will accept reproof from a fictitious character which they would not take from an actual person. Steele obviously was aware of this, for in defending the moral use of the stage, he says: ". . . envy and detraction are baffled, and none are offended, but all insensibly won by personated characters, which they neither look upon as their rivals or superiors. . . . (Guardian 43)" The fictitious editors, in much the same way, were entertaining and attractive characters. Their presence, and especially the personal quality of their lucubrations, simply made their moralizing more palatable.⁴⁵ Just as the

fable (a common device in all of the papers) can persuade obliquely, expressing the sentiments of the teller in an attractive form while allowing him to preserve the dignity both of himself and the listener;⁴⁶ so the use of the fictitious editor can enable the author to moralize in an intimate manner, while he himself remains superficially uninvolved, so that neither he nor his reading audience are embarrassed.

The fictitious editor, then, provided all the advantages of anonymity which the traditional journalistic mask had done. The well-developed ones, in addition, provided attraction, entertainment, cohesion, and an acceptable mouthpiece for censorious comment. They made a tone of genial familiarity possible in an age and a medium which were both too modest to admit it otherwise.

FOOTNOTES

¹Michael Foote, The Pen and the Sword, p. 74.

²Ibid., p. 90

³Peter Smithers, The Life of Joseph Addison, p. 206.

⁴Swift, Journal to Stella, I, 67.

⁵See Spectators 262, 355, 445, 568.

⁶Foote, p. 73.

⁷Rae Blanchard, "Introduction," Steele's 'The Englishman', pp. xiii-xiv. See also Englishman 21: "Your correspondents are a kind of Masqueraders in Wit and Ingenuity; and your Approbation is the Ticket by which they gain Admittance into your Paper. The Numbers you exclude and do not suffer to enter, either for the Meanness of their Habit, or the Rudeness of their Behaviour, have the Indulgence shewed them of being allowed to keep on their Masks, and to retire incognito."

⁸In The Correspondence of Alexander Pope, I, 59.

⁹Smithers, p. 241.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 243-4.

¹¹Spectator 555.

¹²See Tatler 162; Spectators 525, 532, 547; Guardian 171.

¹³James Ferguson, in The British Essayists III, 209.

¹⁴Englishman 50, 51. Lover 3.

¹⁵Spectator 516, Englishman 48.

¹⁶Steele was attempting to prevent the Lord Chamberlain (the Duke of Newcastle) from depriving him of his position as Governor of the Royal Company of Comedians at Drury Lane Theatre. See the introduction and notes by John Loftis, to his edition of the Theatre, and his book, Steele at Drury Lane.

¹⁷Journal to Stella, I, 106.

¹⁸Ibid., 86.

¹⁹Ibid., 150.

²⁰Smithers, p. 161.

²¹Mary Countess Cowper, quoted in notes to Town-Talk 1, in Steele's Periodical Journalism 1714-16, p. 299.

²²Note, here, that even in the dedications to the collected editions the fiction is maintained. Only the dedication to the last volume was signed with Steele's own name, and by that time he was known as the editor, having signed the concluding Tatler.

²³Preface to the octavo edition of the Tatler, British Essayists, I, 8.

²⁴In the Freeholder, Addison merely addresses himself to the ladies, making no attempt to create a sympathetic character for them, but saying: "I question not but the British ladies are very well pleased with the compliment I have paid them in the course of my papers, by regarding them, not only as the most amiable, but the most important part of our community" (No. 32).

²⁵In his introduction to Selections From 'The Tatler' and 'The Spectator', p. vi.

²⁶These were especially common in the Spectator and Guardian. See, for example, Spectators 460, 501, 597; Guardian 56, 66, 158.

²⁷Correspondence, I, 87 (May 17, 1710).

²⁸Nos. 1, 3, 12, 77, 116.

²⁹"Life of Addison," in Lives of the English Poets, I, 414.

³⁰See Aitken, The Life of Richard Steele, volume I, for a detailed account of the money received from sales (pp. 330-31) and for an account of the transactions by which Addison and Steele sold half share in the Spectator bound volumes to Samuel Buckley for £575 (pp. 353-4). Buckley, two years later, sold them to Tonson for £500. Aitken reports, ". . . the price of the collected editions, on royal paper, was £1 a volume, and on medium paper ten shillings" (p. 329). On pages 254-5 he also quotes, as evidence of the readers' interest in collecting back numbers, the following: "The Tatlers begin to swell to a volume as you see by the number of this last; therefore since you like them I had best make a collection of the whole and take the first opportunity that presents to send them over. . . ."

³¹p. 231.

³²"Historical and Biographical Preface to The Spectator," in British Essayists, VI, xiv.

³³Nos. 15, 36, 42, 43, 46, 49.

³⁴Nos. 28, 32, 41.

³⁵Nos. 31, 35.

³⁶C.S. Lewis, "Addison," in Eighteenth Century English Literature, ed. James L. Clifford (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959) pp. 145-6.

³⁷In the Spectator alone, see Nos. 51, 141, 208, 446. See also, Town-Talk and the Theatre.

³⁸Spectators 70 and 74.

³⁹Smithers, p. 354.

⁴⁰Boswell's Life of Johnson, II, 449. See also St. John, from a letter to Swift in The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift, p. 304 (Nov. 16, 1711): "I have a vile story to tell you of the moral philosopher Steele."

⁴¹See Aitken, I, 63.

⁴²Quoted in Aitken, I, 290.

⁴³Aitken, I, 198.

⁴⁴Smithers, p. 208.

⁴⁵As M. R. Watson points out, "the chatty tone, the use of the first person singular, the admission of the reader into the writer's confidence, the autobiographical details are all carefully planned to nurture the sense of intimacy, but they are part of the facade cleverly constructed to hide--or at least disguise--the true purpose of the projects [the reform of manners and morals]." ("The Spectator Tradition and the Development of the Familiar Essay," ELH XIII (1946) 189-215.)

⁴⁶See Spectator 512.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

To say that Steele and Addison were successful as periodical essayists is hardly enough. Not only were they widely read in their own lifetime, they were favoured then and later with that greatest of compliments: imitation.

Few publications in the western world have been honored through the years with more imitations than have the Tatler and Spectator, imitations of title and topic, manner and matter, imitations ranging from close copies to free influence.¹

George Aitken, in his Life of Richard Steele, includes in the appendix a four-page bibliography of titles, English and foreign, imitative of the Tatler, Spectator, or Guardian. Of these, some were indeed close copies, begun as soon as the original papers were dropped. Within two days after the last of Steele's Tatler, another appeared, starting with No. 272, which was obviously intended to pass as a continuation. Under the title was the statement, "This paper, which was not published on Thursday last, is now, upon better thoughts, resolved to be continued as usual, By Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq."² Another appeared shortly after, conducted by William Harrison with the aid of Swift, in which "new characters were introduced, such as 'Humphrey Wagstaff, kinsman to Bickerstaff'."³ Continuations such as these were not so easily propagated after the first Spectator because Steele had deliberately disposed of the Club and brought the paper to a definite close. But after the second series was ended, another was begun by William Bond which began at No. 636, and in which "the form and manner of the original Spectator were closely followed."⁴

Besides these bare-faced copies, there were many sheets which attempted to capitalize on the fame of the originals either by attacking them (usually without arousing any response) or by exploiting one of their characteristics. Among these was the Gazette A-la-mode which used in its opening number the lure of the Bickerstaff genealogy with the following article:

A Letter from Sr. Thomas Whipstaff, and Dame Isabella his wife, to Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq; upon Account of the Pedigree of the Family of the Staffs, wherein they and their Ancestors are left out of the Genealogy to their great

Prejudice and Dishonour; they being the Eldest Branch of the Family, deriving themselves from the Ancient Staffs.

There were also the Whisperer "By Mrs. Jenny Distaff, Half-Sister to Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq.," which fitted itself directly into the scheme of the Tatler by having Jenny rebel against Isaac's plans for her marriage, as set down in No. 75; and Titt for Tatt, a sort of anti-Tatler, "By Jo. Partridge, Esq." (who, of course, predicts Bickerstaff's death).

. . . the Scope and Design of this my Paper shall be to examine, whether the frequent Intelligence my Brother Bickerstaff Publishes to the World, be conformable to the Measures directed from the Stars, by whose Influence we are governed in the Regions here below. For that he has been guilty of many gross Errors and Mistakes will plainly appear. . . . (No. 1)

There were many more like these, many bad, some (for example, the Female Tatler by "Mrs. Crackenthorpe") apparently good, but they all lived on the fruits of Bickerstaff's fame, for, as he says in Tatler 229:

. . . I was threatened to be answered weekly Tit for Tat; I was undermined by the Whisperer; haunted by Tom Brown's Ghost; scolded at by a Female Tatler; and slandered by another of the same character, under the title of Atalantis. I have been annotated, retattled, examined, and condoled; but it being my standing maxim never to speak ill of the dead, I shall let these authors rest in peace; and take great pleasure in thinking, that I have sometimes been the means of their getting a belly-full.

Even the Theatre had its imitator in the form of a periodical of the same name "by Sir John Falstaffe," which actually began as the Anti-Theatre and then was continued under the shorter title after Steele's last number. Falstaffe gives an account of his having opposed Sir John Edgar, explains that they had been reconciled before Edgar's "Departure from this Stage of Business and Life," and now informs us that "Sir John chose me, from among all Men living, to be his sole executor" (No. 16).

All of these papers utilize, it must be noticed, a fictitious editor device, developed to varying degrees. In later papers, when it was no longer fashionable or practical to pose as a continuation of the Tatler, Spectator or other, the actual form of the Spectator tradition was still

used. Though the "editors" may no longer be Bickerstaff, or a relative, or an antagonist, they are still recognizably influenced by him.

By 1750, slight changes had taken place in the format of the periodical essay. The single essay received even more emphasis than Steele and Addison had given it, and the delicate balance which they had established between humour and homily had been somewhat disturbed so that here was a tendency toward either constant levity or constant moralizing.⁵ The World, published in 1753 by Edward Moore is an example of the lighter type. It was supposedly written by one Adam Fitz-Adam, a very facetious gentleman who is, in many respects, Bickerstaff run wild. He has all the pride and properties of Isaac in extravagant proportions, as his advertisement shows:

To be spoke with every Thursday at Tully's head
in Pall-mall, Adam Fitz-Adam; who after forty years
travel through all the parts of the known and
unknown world; after having investigated all
sciences, acquired all languages, and entered
into the deepest recesses of nature and the
passions, is, at last, for the emolument and
glory of his native country, returned to England;
where he undertakes to cure all the diseases of
the human mind. He cures lying, cheating, swearing,
drinking, gaming, avarice, and ambition in the men;
and envy, slander, coquetry, prudery, vanity, wantonness,
and inconstancy in the women. He undertakes, by
a safe, pleasant, and speedy method, to get husbands
for young maids, and good-humour for old ones.
He instructs wives, after the easiest and newest
fashion, in the art of pleasing, and widows in
the art of mourning. He gives common sense to
philosophers, candour to disputants, modesty to
critics, decency to men of fashion, and frugality
to tradesmen. For farther particulars inquire at
the place above-mentioned, or of any of the kings
and princes in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America.
(No. 1)

After two hundred very popular numbers, the paper ended with an account by Mary Cooper (the "publisher") of a tragic accident, the last words, and the death of Fitz-Adam; with this modest epitaph, commissioned at his request:

He was the deepest PHILOSOPHER
The wittiest WRITER
and
The greatest MAN
Of THIS AGE or NATION

A less entertaining character, the fictitious editor of the Connoisseur (1754) was Mr. Town, connoisseur, critic, and censor-general, who was aided by his cousin Village, handling the country news. In Edinburgh (where reprints and imitations of the Spectator had been very popular) two papers appeared, by a group of writers led by Henry MacKenzie. The Mirror (1779) begins with an history of the "author's" life which is faintly reminiscent of that given in the first Spectator, though less whimsical: he is "the only son of a gentleman of moderate fortune." His parents died, leaving him in the care of a guardian. He was well educated and, at the age of twenty, having completed his schooling, he made the tour of Europe. He has recovered by the aid of friends from a deep melancholy caused by "a misfortune of the tenderest kind," and is now prepared to conduct his work. The supposed author of the Lounger, as well, gives an account of himself in the first number. He is called an idle lounger by his friends who do not realize that he, like Mr. Spectator, is actually an avid, but inconspicuous observer of humanity.

Of the more serious papers Johnson's Rambler is the most famous, and it is interesting to note that though he makes some use of such conventional periodical devices as the letter and the "character" (that of Suspirius, for example, in Rambler 59) he does not take pains to develop a complex mask. The rather somber Rambler simply begins with some observations on the difficulty of the first address, and the Idler with a simple "character" of himself and all idlers. Perhaps this neglect of the fictitious editor is due to the fact that Johnson professed objection to the practice of mixing gay and solemn objects in the same paper⁶ or, more likely, because he simply was not overly concerned with entertainment. Certainly he made it clear in the last Rambler that he had not tried to please the multitude, and this is probably the thing that distinguishes him most definitely from Steele and Addison. Because he was more concerned with serious didacticism than with being popular, a fictitious editor would have been of little use to him; a simple mask would do him quite as well, especially one like the Idler which was a potential source for some mild humour.⁷ A similar type of undeveloped "editor" who was introduced in the opening number in a short "character" was found in the Adventurer of 1752, in which

Johnson had a hand.

All of these papers, in form and material, are greatly indebted to the Spectator tradition (even Johnson, after all, followed the form of the Spectator quite closely). They all begin and end after the manner of Steele's and Addison's periodicals, and most of them, at some time, make reference to the Spectator, either expressing their indebtedness to it and their admiration for it, or showing how they have improved themselves by departing in some way from its plan.⁸

Perhaps the only really successful variant of the form was Goldsmith's Citizen of the World, which employed a fictitious framework probably borrowed from the Turkish Spy or Montesquieu's Lettres Persanes: the pseudo-foreign letter supposedly written by a visitor to the country, commenting on the manners and customs to be found there (the device had also been used by Addison in Spectator 50, but was never pursued). In this case, the letters are written by one Lien Chi Altangi, a Chinese philosopher-adventurer who comments on England and the English in correspondence mostly with a colleague in Peking. Quite an elaborate fictitious framework is established. The letters begin shortly after Lien Chi arrives in London, include accounts of his journey from China to Europe (Letter 8) and descriptions of his whimsical friend, the Man in Black (Letters 26, 27). In addition, the adventures of Lien Chi's son are reported at intervals, as he is made a slave in Persia, meets a fair fellow-captive, escapes with her, is separated from her again, and eventually arrives in England.⁹ In a sense, the histories of Lien Chi and the son Hingpo form an actual plot structure, very frail and disjointed of course, but all tied neatly together as everything ends happily in the last number with the marriage of the son to his long-lost sweetheart just returned to England herself, who, coincidentally, is the niece of the Man in Black.

Being a foreigner Lien Chi describes vice, corruption and folly with ironic naïveté and so he becomes a device admirably suited to satire (which is more common here than in the Spectator). He is naturally instilled with the necessary objectivity by virtue of the fact that he is a stranger, and he has acquired the wisdom so much needed by a critical observer through study and travel.¹⁰ But perhaps most important of all, he allows a change

in style, something which was badly needed, since everyone except Johnson seemed to imitate the Spectator's familiar prose. Goldsmith, through the use of his exotic "editor", is able to indulge his fancy with all sorts of pseudo-oriental constructions, such as "may the wings of peace rest upon thy dwelling and the shield of conscience preserve thee from vice and misery"¹¹

Any variations from the Tatler-Spectator-Guardian tradition undoubtedly arose from the realization that even a good thing could be worked to death. Indeed even the creators had shown signs of fatigue, or at least recognition of the fact that the device had been fully worked out during the writing of the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian. The second series of the Spectator, as well as the Lover and the Theatre, introduced some minor variations, but even these productions are part of a gradual decline in the use of the device. The "editor" appeared in the first numbers with his background and associates, but he was not exploited to any extent; as if the authors were resting on the laurels of the Spectator and only included the "editor" as an attraction in deference to popular demand. As time went on, the periodicals became shorter and more political, and generally speaking the fictitious editor became correspondingly unimportant. The first-person tone was still present, but in the second series of the Spectator, for example, the number of dramatic scenes involving the "editor" are very few indeed.¹² In four of the nine papers after the Guardian, if there was any attempt to establish a mask at all it did not include a character and background, and in two others (Town-Talk and Chit-Chat) a completely new form was introduced in a try at novelty.

It must be remembered that Steele and Addison were primarily concerned with the instructive value of their papers; that the "editors", for them, were essentially a means of accomplishing a didactic end. Thus when they quickly arrived at a device as obviously effective as Mr. Spectator, there was little need for further experiment. In this sense, the success of the Spectator may have been unfortunate because it discouraged further development not only in their own periodicals, but in those which came after. In the purely political papers, of course, the device was not used to any extent because it was not needed. The authors were not attempting to

disguise or soften the intent of their lucubrations; there was no need to "enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality;" they were simply concerned with conducting a campaign, and so a fully developed fictitious editor would have provided little advantage. Fortunately the demands of the early major papers had been greater, and the result had been some valuable literary creations. It was these that were copied. They were so effective, and the type of work in which they appeared became so popular, that the public was willing to accept what in most cases were mere shadows of the originals; bones without the flesh. The heirs of Bickerstaff and Mr. Spectator remained an integral part of the essay periodical right up until the time of its absorption into other forms, but it is the Tatler and Spectator which are read today, while their lack-lustre imitators, having said essentially the same things, are now doomed to obscurity.

The development of this device of the fictitious editor, then, was an achievement of real wit and real importance. Faced at the outset with the problem of what type of journal he was going to write, Steele had a wide choice of predecessors from which he could draw inspiration. There were the learned journals, the question-answer periodicals, the miscellanies, and those like Defoe's Advice From the Scandalous Club and the British Apollo which were nearing the essay-periodical form as the letters and answers became longer. All of these had their disadvantages, however. The learned journals were limited in their coverage, the sheets like the Athenian Mercury were very impersonal and overly devoted to technical instruction, and the miscellanies were too often purely entertaining, as were the works like Defoe's Advice . . ., and the British Apollo. All of these, as well, tended to lack cohesion; to fall into a series of miscellaneous, often occasional pieces.

As the Tatler began to lose its disjointed, departmental nature, it became apparent that Steele's and Addison's interest lay in the direction of social reform, mixed with entertainment, preferably delivered in one complete essay. The decision seems to have been, to retain the use of letters and "characters;" to be morally instructive rather than educational; to be less serious than the learned journals, but more serious than, say, the London Spy. The authors wished to be didactic, but at the same time they

were interested in making their papers acceptable to the popular reader. They needed something which would attract and hold the audience while the lesson was being given. In addition to all of this, they wanted to be anonymous so that they could be as facetious, as satirical, or as condescendingly moral as they liked. These were the problems, and the development of the fictitious editor resolved them, probably beyond expectation. He protected the authors, attracted readers, provided a connective link between the papers, and above all, made impersonal moral, social, and religious sermonizing alive and intimate to a remarkable degree.

That the fictitious editors of Steele and Addison served the authors well in their immediate moral aims is clearly shown by such testimonials as Gay's The Present State of Wit, and the homage of many contemporaries and followers. The Spectator especially was immensely influential as a popularizer of moral teachings throughout the eighteenth and even the nineteenth centuries.¹³ At present, their teachings tend to be distasteful to an audience with a changed morality, yet the Tatler and Spectator continue to be read because, ~~due~~ largely to the creation of the "editors" and their fictitious environments, the papers have assumed a literary importance. There seems little doubt that modern readers turn to the Spectator more for entertainment than instruction; and the source of most of that entertainment is the fictitious editor and friends. The literary reputation now held by Steele and Addison is greatly indebted to the success of this device; to its value as a source of whimsical humour, its possible influence on the novel,¹⁴ and above all to its tremendous part in the shaping of the English periodical essay.

FOOTNOTES

¹Richmond P. Bond, "Introduction," Contemporaries of the 'Tatler' and 'Spectator,' Augustan Reprint Society Publication No. 47 (1954) p. iv.

²Graham, English Literary Periodicals, pp. 85-86.

³Ibid., p. 86.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., p. 119.

⁶Rambler 107.

⁷The Idler opens with some appealing banter about the title, including, "It is at least a definition from which none that shall find it in this paper can be excepted; for who can be more idle than the reader of the Idler."

⁸See, for example, Connoisseur 140, Observer 1, Mirror 1, Idler 1.

⁹Nos. 22, 35, 36, 37, 59, 60, 94, 123.

¹⁰Lien Chi says in the third letter: ". . . by long travelling I am taught to laugh at folly alone, and to find nothing truly ridiculous but villany and vice."

¹¹Letter 2. See also the comments of "editor" in his preface, on Lien Chi's style: "The Chinese are always concise, so is he; simple, so is he: the Chinese are grave and sententious, so is he. But in one particular, the resemblance is peculiarly striking: the Chinese are often dull, and so is he."

¹²Only Nos. 565, 568, 570, and 631, none of which are especially satisfying.

¹³Peter Smithers even goes so far as to say, "the influence of the Spectator on English thought and manners demands a volume for its consideration. Its immediate effect was spectacular; its ultimate contribution might be found to exceed that of any other work except the Bible." (Life of Addison p. 245)

¹⁴The material of the periodical essay seems to have been absorbed into the newspapers and magazines; the fictitious devices into the novel. George Marr suggests that the step from the essay periodical to the novel was a natural one. He points out that Fielding began as a periodical journalist in the Champion (1739), a Spectator-like paper in which there was a fictitious editor named Captain Vinegar; and he adds: "it is not difficult to trace a relationship between the "asides" in Tom Jones to the essays of Fielding in the Champion." (The Periodical Essayists of the Eighteenth Century, p. 111.)

The essay periodicals so often were philosophy illustrated with character, it would not seem an unnatural step to shift the emphasis somewhat and arrive at the type of eighteenth-century novel in which the characters have become most important but are still morally illustrative, and in which the plots are embellished with digressions resembling short essays.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

- The Adventurer, 140 nos. 7 November 1752 - 9 March 1754. [Hawkesworth and Johnson.] in The British Essayists, ed. James Ferguson, XXIII-XXV. London, 1819.
- The Athenian Oracle. Being an Entire Collection of the Valuable Questions and Answers in the Old Athenian Mercuries. [Dunton and others.] 4 vols. London, 1728.
- Chit-Chat. 2 nos. 10 and 16 March 1716. [Steele.] in Steele's Periodical Journalism 1714-16, ed. Rae Blanchard. Oxford, 1959.
- The Citizen of the World. 123 nos. [Goldsmith.] in The British Essayists, XLV.
- The Connoisseur. 140 nos. 31 January 1754 - 30 September 1756. [Colman and Thornton.] in The British Essayists, XXX-XXXII.
- The Englishman. First series 56 nos. 6 October 1713 - 11 February 1714. Second series 38 nos. 1 July 1715 - 21 November 1715. [Steele.] in Steele's 'The Englishman', ed. Rae Blanchard. Oxford, 1955.
- The Freeholder. 55 nos. 23 December 1715 - 29 June 1716. [Addison.] in The Works of Joseph Addison, ed. Henry G. Bohn.
- The Gazette A-la-mode: or Tom Brown's Ghost. 5 nos. 12-26 May 1709. Nos. 1, 3, 5 in Contemporaries of the 'Tatler' and 'Spectator', Augustan Reprint Society, 1954.
- The Gentleman's Journal; or, The Monthly Miscellany. 33 nos. January 1692 - November 1694. [Motteux.] London, University of Microfilms, 1956.
- The Guardian. 175 nos. 12 March 1713 - 1 October 1713. [Steele, Addison, and others.] in The British Essayists, XVI-XVIII.
- The Idler. 103 nos. 15 April 1758 - 5 April 1760. [Johnson.] in The British Essayists, XXXIII.
- The Lounger. 101 nos. 5 February 1785 - 6 January 1787. [Mackenzie and others.] in The British Essayists, XXXVI-XXXVII.
- The Lover. 40 nos. 25 February 1714 - 27 May 1714. [Steele and others.] in Steele's Periodical Journalism 1714-16.
- The Mirror. 110 nos. 23 January 1779 - 27 May 1780. [Mackenzie and others.] in The British Essayists, XXXIV-XXXV.
- The Observer. 152 nos. 1785. [Cumberland.] in The British Essayists, XXXVIII-XL.

The Rambler. 208 nos. 20 March 1750 - 14 March 1752. [Johnson.] in The British Essayists, XIX-XXII.

The Reader. 9 nos. 22 April - 10 May 1714. [Steele.] in Steele's Periodical Journalism 1714-16.

The Spectator. First series 555 nos. 1 March 1711 - 6 December 1712, [Steele Addison and others.]; second series 80 nos. 18 June - 20 December 1714. [Addison, Budgell and others.] in The British Essayists, VI-XV.

_____. ed. Gregory Smith. 4 vols. London 1961.

The Tatler. 271 nos. 12 April 1709 - 2 January 1711. [Steele, Addison and others.] in The British Essayists, I-V.

The Theatre. 28 nos. 2 January - 5 April, 1720. [Steele.] in Steele's 'The Theatre,' ed. John Loftis. Oxford, 1962.

The Theatre. nos. 16-26. 9 April - 14 May 1720. [Anon.] Augustan Reprint Society, 1948.

Titt for Tatt. nos. 1, 2, 5. 2 - 11 March 1709. in Contemporaries of the 'Tatler' and 'Spectator,' Augustan Reprint Society, 1954.

Town-Talk. 9 nos. 17 December 1715 - 13 February 1716. [Steele.] in Steele's Periodical Journalism 1714-16.

The Whig-Examiner. 5 nos. 14 September - 12 October 1710. [Addison.] in The Works of Joseph Addison, IV.

The Whisperer. No. 1. 11 October 1709. in Contemporaries of the 'Tatler' and 'Spectator,' Augustan Reprint Society, 1954.

The World. 209 nos. 4 January 1753 - 30 December 1756. [Edward Moore.] in The British Essayists, XXVI-XXIX.

SECONDARY SOURCES

- Addison, Joseph. The Letters of Joseph Addison, ed. Walter Graham. Oxford, 1941.
- Aitken, George A. The Life of Richard Steele. 2 vols. London, 1889.
- Allen, Robert J. "Introduction," Selections From 'The Tatler' and 'The Spectator'. New York, 1960.
- The Best of Defoe's 'Review', ed. William L. Payne. New York, 1951.
- Blanchard, Rae. Steele's Periodical Journalism 1714-16. Oxford, 1959.
- _____. Steele's 'The Englishman'. Oxford, 1955.
- Bond, Richmond P. "Introduction," Contemporaries of the 'Tatler' and 'Spectator'. Augustan Reprint Society, 1954.
- Boswell, James. The Life of Samuel Johnson, ed. G. B. Hill, rev. L. F. Powell. 6 vols. Oxford, 1934-50.
- Burton, Robert. The Anatomy of Melancholy, ed. Floyd Dell and Paul Jordan-Smith. New York, 1951.
- Dobree, Bonamy. English Essayists. London, 1946.
- Ferguson, James. The British Essayists. 45 vols. London, 1819.
- Foote, Michael. The Pen and the Sword. London, 1957.
- Gay, John. "The Present State of Wit (1711)," Augustan Reprint Society, 1947.
- Gildon, Charles. "History of the Athenian Society," in The Athenian Oracle, IV. London, 1728.
- Graham, Walter. "Defoe's Review and Steele's Tatler - the Question of Influence," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, XXXIII (1934), 250-254.
- _____. English Literary Periodicals. New York, 1930.
- _____. "Some Predecessors of the Tatler," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, XXIV (1925), 548-554.
- Johnson, Samuel. "Life of Addison," in Lives of the English Poets, I. London, 1959.
- Lewis, C. S. "Addison," Eighteenth-Century English Literature, ed. James L. Clifford. New York, 1959.

- Loftis, John. Steele at Drury Lane. Los Angeles, 1952.
- _____. Steele's 'The Theatre.' Oxford, 1962.
- Marr, George S. The Periodical Essayists of the Eighteenth Century. London, 1923.
- New Letters to the 'Tatler' and 'Spectator,' ed. Richmond P. Bond, Austin, 1959.
- Pope, Alexander. The Correspondence of Alexander Pope, ed. George Sherburn. 5 vols. Oxford, 1956.
- Smithers, Peter. The Life of Joseph Addison. Oxford, 1954.
- Studies in the Early English Periodical, ed. Richmond P. Bond. Chapel Hill, 1957.
- Swift, Jonathan. The Journal to Stella. in The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, ed. Frederick Ryland. 7 vols. London, 1908.
- Troyer, Howard William. Ned Ward of Grubstreet. Cambridge, 1946.
- Walker, Hugh. The English Essay and Essayists. London, 1928.
- Watson, M. R. "The Spectator Tradition and the Development of the Familiar Essay," ELH, XXII (1946), 189-215.

B29810